

Editorial

Kairaranga has a history of sharing stories on effective educational practice that supports learners and teachers in New Zealand schools. It has been the Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) journal for five years, developed by a group of RTLBs committed to sharing and disseminating examples of effective and interesting practices.

Through sheer hard work, tenacity, perseverance and a central belief in practitioners, learners and educators, the former editorial board for this journal developed a journal that they now willingly share and co-work with the Ministry of Education and the new Editorial Team involving representatives from a range of universities and research institutes. Therefore the journal is now going through a transition period to enter into a new era of celebrating practice in partnership with the Ministry of Education – Group Special Education (GSE). As with all change, it has been an evolving, dynamic process requiring us to question, challenge and shake all our assumptions about what we mean by educational practice, and to re-examine and build on the integrity of the original intent of the journal.

Kairaranga – Weaving educational threads. Weaving educational practice is a journal that actively seeks to celebrate the work undertaken in New Zealand schools, early childhood centres and homes to support the learning, social and cultural achievements of all children and young people. To hear the voices of those taking part in supporting the next generation, this journal of educational practice is a means to hear and learn from practitioners, teachers, specialists and families, and learners themselves, about how best to support the needs we all have – the need to learn, to live in a diverse society, the need to be respected for who we are, and the need to be valued and loved. Learners with impairments have often been part of disabling environments and societies, and continue to do so where a context prevents them from getting their needs met. For many learners, marginalising and exclusionary practices occur on a daily basis – often insidious and unquestioned.

This journal of educational practice seeks to provide a range of stories, research articles, and position papers to explore issues around learning, to provide a forum for debate and dialogue, and for looking at New Zealand practices. Irrespective of our role in education, individually we need to have a sense of ownership of both the process and the outcomes for all our work, at every level. Such ownership is appropriate, indeed necessary, since our own internal professional sense of accountability for excellence is more powerful than external sources of accountability or compliance measures.

As we enter into an era of evidence-based policy and evidence-based practice, we need to examine and question what constitutes evidence. If we are to solely place confidence and trust in research, we lose much valued evidence in the hands of children and young people, their families, teachers and those practitioners that work with them. We see this as an important source of evidence that combined with research and other forms of evidence help inform and support decisions for assessments and interventions. Therefore this journal is an important mechanism to share different forms of evidence.

In the first issue of **Kairaranga – Weaving educational threads. Weaving educational practice** we bring you a diverse selection of papers and book reviews highlighting experiences of those working in special education, and hearing the voices of children and young people.

Everyone is capable of instilling excitement, hope and opportunity for learners. We hope this is one way to acknowledge and talk about... what works, for our kids, in New Zealand schools and early childhood settings. We wish you well in your work, and want you to enjoy reading and sharing this issue as much as we have enjoyed the process of bringing it to you.

Cath Newdick (RTLB) and Roseanna Bourke (MOE) on behalf of the Editorial Board and Team

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Printing

Bryce Francis Graphics, Wellington.

Kairaranga

Two issues per year

Subscription Information

1. For RTLB: Kairaranga
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Submission Information

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ISSN 1175-9232

The Kairaranga Editorial Board has made every effort to ensure that all items in this journal are accurate. Views expressed or implied in this journal are not necessarily the views of the Editorial Board, Ministry of Education and the New Zealand RTLB Association.