



Module 2: Why Is Inclusion Important?

FROM THE ONLINE RESOURCE *INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM*

“ Inclusion teaches us to think about we, rather than I. ”

Shapon-Shevin, 2008, page 53

The activities in this module introduce leaders and teachers to the topic of inclusion and to the materials in *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum*. There are six activities in this module:

- Activity 2.1 Including everyone
- Activity 2.2 What does an inclusive school look like?
- Activity 2.3 Inclusive practice in action
- Activity 2.4 Whatu pōkeka – students' views on why inclusion is important
- Activity 2.5 Exploring the *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum* website
- Activity 2.6 Knowing, believing, doing

Leaders and teachers will share and explore understandings on inclusion, reflect on the ideas in *Success for All – Every School, Every Child*, and relate what they have read and talked about to their own context. This module is likely to identify key areas for more discussion and set the direction for further professional learning.

Each activity has a particular focus. They can be completed in any combination or order.

All resource sheets referred to in the activities are at the back of the module.



Essential reading before facilitating this module:

- [About this resource](#) in *Implementing an Inclusive Curriculum*
- [Success for All – Every School, Every Child](#)
- [What an Inclusive School Looks Like](#)
- [Inclusive Practices for Students with Special Education Needs in Schools](#)

Other related resources

- [Developing an inclusive classroom culture](#) guide on the Inclusive Education site
- [Leading schools that include all learners](#) guide on the Inclusive Education site

Activity 2.1 Including everyone

The purpose of this activity is to introduce the topic of inclusion in an engaging and light-hearted way while challenging teachers and leaders to think about what inclusion means and looks like in a school.

It serves as a warm-up in which participants look at a cartoon about inclusion and talk about it with their colleagues in light of practice at their own school.

Resources required:

- Copies of resource sheet 2.1 'Clearing a Path'
Alternatively access this online and show it on a datashow or smartboard.

Task: Chat time

Put up the cartoon and the questions below. Ask everyone to turn to those around them and discuss the cartoon in relation to one of the questions.

- *What do we do already that models the 'clearing a path' approach? What else could we do? Who could help us with the thinking?*
- *Where in our school could we provide an equivalent to the ramp? – for example, captions on videos provide access to video content for students with hearing impairment but are really useful for second language learners or in noisy environments.*
- *What approaches or strategies do we make use of for one student that could be offered as choices to all?*

Give everyone 5 minutes to chat, then ask people to share the main points from their discussion with the whole group.

Activity 2.2 What does an inclusive school look like?

The purpose of this activity is to examine current understandings about inclusion and identify areas where more learning is needed.

“ *Inclusive education practices are about ensuring all students are made to feel welcome at school and are able to take part in all aspects of school life. Diversity is respected and school-wide practices and classroom programmes respond to students' different needs, skills, interests, cultures and backgrounds.* ”

About the inclusive practices tools, n.d., paragraph 3

The activity has three tasks designed to explore what an inclusive school looks like. The tasks draw on people's existing knowledge and understandings of inclusion and compare these with a description of inclusion for New Zealand schools.

Resources required:

- Video clip – [My World, My View](#) (8 minutes)
- Resource sheet 2.2 What does an inclusive school look like?
- [What an Inclusive School Looks Like](#)

Task 1: Initial brainstorm

Task instructions:

1. Watch the video clip '[My World, My View](#)'.
2. Working in groups of three, reflect on the video and use a spider-web chart to brainstorm 'What does an inclusive school look like?' Record each idea on a sticky note so they can be grouped easily in the next task.
3. Pair up with another group of three to share ideas. Combine the ideas of both groups under common themes to develop a collaborative brainstorm.

Task 2: Connecting with the ideas in Success for All – Every School, Every Child

Task instructions:

1. Continue working in your group of six. Use the resource sheet and align the discussion points from the brainstorm activity under 'present', 'participating and engaging', 'learning and achieving', and 'belonging'. These are the key outcomes for students set out in *Success for All – Every School, Every Child*, the Ministry of Education's strategy for building an inclusive education system.
2. As a group, discuss:
 - *What do we notice?*
 - *What are we wondering about?*
3. Read the Ministry of Education pamphlet *What an Inclusive School Looks Like* and discuss:
 - *What do we notice now?*
 - *Where are the strengths of what we developed on the resource sheet? Where are the gaps that we need to address?*
 - *What do we need to have further conversations about as a school community?*

Task 3: Questions for reflection

Facilitate a whole-group discussion about these questions:

As a school ...

- What do we **know** we do well? How do we know?
- What do we **think** we do well? How do we know?
- What do we need to find more out about? How will we achieve this?
- What should be our first steps in moving forward together?
- How can we ensure we're on the right track or pathway?

Activity 2.3 Inclusive practice in action

The purpose of this activity is to examine how collaborative partnerships can help a school ensure that all students are present, engaged, achieving, and belonging, and that their whānau are supported and active contributors. This introduces one of the key outcomes of *Success for All – Every School, Every Child*.

“ Inclusive education is about the full participation and achievement of all learners. In fully inclusive schools, children and young people with special education needs are engaged and achieving through being present, participating and learning. ”

Ministry of Education, 2014, page 1

In this activity, participants watch a video clip about inclusion and complete a jigsaw task to reflect on what contributes to students being present, participating, being engaged, achieving and feeling as though they belong at school. Listening to stories of inclusion is a powerful strategy for connecting with hearts and minds. The video clips provide opportunities to link to current experiences and challenge existing understandings.

Resources required:

- Resource sheet 2.3 Inclusive practice in action – learning circles
- Video clip 1 – [Learning Better Together](#) (19 minutes)
- Video clip 2 – [Education for All](#) (19 minutes)

Select one of the video clips for this activity.

Task 1: Preparing for viewing

Before watching the video, facilitate a group discussion about these questions to set the scene:

- What do you think ‘collaborative partnerships’ look like in a school environment?
- What does ‘learning better together’ look like in a school environment?

Task 2: Learning circles

Task instructions:

1. Work in four groups – one group for each row on the learning circles resource sheet:
 - Classroom practices
 - Beliefs and attitudes
 - Resourcing/staffing
 - Systems and processes.
2. As you watch the video clip, record notes and reflections on your assigned row on the resource sheet.
3. After watching the video, work in your groups. Discuss and summarise the key points for your row of the resource sheet.
4. Create a graphic representation of your key points (e.g., a mind map, PowerPoint, or Prezi presentation) to share with the whole group.

Alternatively, form new groups of four that cover all four rows of the template. Share and discuss the key messages identified in each row.

Task 3: Further discussion

After the groups have shared their key points, facilitate a whole-group discussion using these questions:

- *What was the main question that arose for your group from watching the video or discussions?*
- *What's the next step you will take to resolve this question?*

Activity 2.4 Whatu pōkeka – students' views on why inclusion is important

This activity supports a staff group to seek their students' perspectives about how inclusive the school is.

“ Carefully woven into the inside of a whatu pōkeka or baby blanket are feathers to provide warmth, comfort, security and refuge from the elements. The pōkeka takes the shape of the child as it learns and grows, just as the development of a curriculum is determined and shaped by the learner. ”

Ministry of Education, 2014, page 2

The activity introduces teachers to the whakataukī in *Success for All – Every School, Every Child* and outlines a task for them to complete with their students about what makes them feel valued and feel like they belong at school. (This task can also be adapted for capturing whānau voices.)

Resources required:

- Copies of *Success for All – Every School, Every Child*
Alternatively people can access this online during the activity.
- Copies of resource sheet 2.4 Whatu pōkeka. Make sure there are enough feathers for everyone to have two.



Task 1: Collaborative whatu pōkeka

Introduce the activity by sharing the whakataukī and its ‘unpacking’ in *Success for All – Every School, Every Child*. Distribute copies of the document or view it online.

Task instructions:

1. Take two feathers and record your responses to the following two sentence starters (one on each feather):
 - *I feel valued at school when ...*
 - *I feel I belong at school when ...*
2. Make a small group with three or four others and share your statements. Consider how you could do this task with your class (or classes) and use alternative sentence starters. (e.g., *I'm happy at school when ...*)

Bring everyone back together and ask each small group to share their discussion with the whole group.

Create a group whatu pōkeka by gluing the feathers onto a large piece of paper for hanging in a communal place in the school, such as the staffroom.

Ask everyone to create a whatu pōkeka with their class (or chosen classes) using the sentence starters they developed.

Task 2: What do students say about how inclusive the school is?

Once the class whatu pōkeka have been created, reconvene the group and ask everyone to share the whatu pōkeka created by their class.

Put the whatu pōkeka up around the room. Ask people to work in small groups and move around the whatu pōkeka to read what the students have said.

Task instructions:

1. Work in a small group and read the classes’ whatu pōkeka. Look for common messages and note down students’ comments that you find particularly powerful.
2. With your group, discuss these questions and record your main points on a flip chart or electronically to share with the whole group:
 - *What do the students’ comments say about what an inclusive school means to them?*
 - *What do the students’ comments say about how inclusive our school is?*
 - *What inclusive practices exist in the school that underpin the students comments?*
 - *Are there any comments that you find surprising, or comments that you expected to see but were not present?*
 - *To what extent do the whatu pōkeka reflect the voices of every child in the school?*

Bring everyone back together and ask each small group to share their discussion with the whole group. As they do this, summarise the main ideas on a whiteboard or Google Doc under the following headings:

- What are we doing well?
- What are our next steps?

Facilitate a group discussion about how to adapt this activity to capture whānau voices (e.g., at a whānau meeting) about what an inclusive school means to them and how inclusive they think the school is.

Activity 2.5 Exploring the *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum* website

The purpose of this activity is to explore the framework for an inclusive school curriculum in *Implementing an Inclusive Curriculum* and to become familiar with the *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum* site.

Participants discuss the framework and reflect on how it relates to their classrooms and their practices. Small groups then share questions that the framework raises for them, which are then used to explore the sections of the *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum* site.



Resources required:

- Copies of Figure 1 (the framework for an inclusive school curriculum) in *Implementing an Inclusive Curriculum*
- Smartboard, data projector, and laptop with an internet connection, or multiple laptops/tablets with internet connections to explore the *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum* site

Task 1: Unpacking the framework

Distribute copies of the framework diagram and facilitate a group discussion about these questions:

- *Why do you think it's necessary for the framework's elements to sit within the New Zealand Curriculum?*
- *What does effective pedagogy look like for students with additional learning needs?*
- *Building on strengths and aspirations, making learning visible, and recognising progress are prominent features of the diagram – what do you think this is saying about teaching and learning in an inclusive classroom?*
- *A rich knowledge of the learner is a central idea in the framework – who contributes to building this knowledge?*
- *Some students with additional learning needs are supported by a team, made up of people internal and external to the school. Where do you think these people would be if they were shown in the framework?*

Task 2: Relating the framework to practice

Task instructions:

1. Work in small groups and select two elements shown in the framework diagram. Discuss the questions below and record points and questions that arise on a flip chart or electronically to share with the whole group:
 - *What do we think these elements of the framework mean?*
 - *What do these parts of the framework look like in practice in our classrooms?*
 - *What questions does this framework raise for us about inclusive teaching and learning?*

Task 3: Exploring the site to answer questions

After the small groups have shared their key points, use the questions they have posed to explore the *Inclusive Practice and the School Curriculum* site. Ensure you show the group the corresponding area in the website for each element in the framework *Implementing an Inclusive Curriculum* (and point out that some sections are still under development). Also show them the classroom examples in the *Inclusion in Practice* area.

Activity 2.6 Knowing, Believing, Doing

The purpose of this activity is for participants to explore the role of knowledge, beliefs, and practices in inclusion and to identify their next steps in making a difference for all students.

In the activity, participants connect with their prior understandings about the knowledge, beliefs, and practices that make a difference in an inclusive environment. Following this brainstorm, they read a section from an article that encourages teachers to do things differently and to reconsider their attitudes and beliefs. To conclude, participants identify and share the next steps for themselves.

Resources required

- Copies of resource sheet 2.6 – *Knowing, believing, doing* (one per group, enlarged to A3)
- Small sticky notes
- Copies of pages 11–15 from the article [Developing Inclusive Practice: A Role for Teachers and Teacher Education?](#) by Martyn Rouse (one per participant)

Task 1: Drawing on prior knowledge

Task instructions:

1. Working in small groups, brainstorm answers to the question in the middle of Resource sheet 2.6 ('What knowledge, beliefs, and practices make a difference in an inclusive environment?').
2. Record the responses on sticky notes and place them on the resource sheet.

Task 2: Gaining new knowledge

Task instructions:

1. Read pages 11-15 of the article *Developing Inclusive Practice: A Role for Teachers and Teacher Education?*
2. In small groups, compare the key messages in the reading with the sticky notes from the brainstorm in Task 1.
3. Have a whole-group discussion on how the ideas in the reading have added to the prior knowledge seen in the sticky notes.

Task 3: Identifying next steps

Task instructions:

1. Working individually, consider where you are at in relation to the triangle. Ask yourself:
 - What are my next steps in order to connect with all three corners of the triangle?
 - What is the first thing I am going to put into effect? Why?
 - How will I go about putting it into effect? What support will I require?
2. In pairs, discuss your next steps and the strategies you have identified for acting on them.





CLEARING A PATH
FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
CLEARS THE PATH FOR EVERYONE!

Resource sheet 2.2 What does an inclusive school look like?

PRESENT	<p>School-wide culture</p> <p><i>The way a school welcomes a learner and the feel of the school</i></p>	
	<p>School leadership</p> <p><i>The strength of its leaders</i></p>	

PARTICIPATING AND ENGAGING	<p>School-wide systems and processes</p> <p><i>The way the school runs</i></p>	
	<p>Parent, whānau, and community connections</p> <p><i>The strength of its relationships</i></p>	

Resource sheet 2.2 What does an inclusive school look like? (continued)

LEARNING AND ACHIEVING	Teaching and learning <i>The knowledge and skills of its teachers in including all learners</i>	
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BELONGING	What an inclusive school <i>feels</i> like to students, whānau, staff, and community	
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Resource sheet 2.3 Inclusive practice in action - learning circles

	Classroom practices	Beliefs and attitudes	Resourcing / staffing	Systems and processes
Presence				
Participation and engagement				
Learning and achievement				
Belonging				

Resource sheet 2.4 Whatu pōkeka

Enlarge to A3





Knowing



Believing



Doing

