



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

From the New Zealand Curriculum to School Curriculum



A resource for principals
and curriculum leaders

This first set of materials supporting *The New Zealand Curriculum* is for principals and curriculum leaders. It comprises:

- *From the New Zealand Curriculum to School Curriculum* (booklet, item 32631): key considerations in engaging with *The New Zealand Curriculum*, reflective questions, and brief examples of different approaches;
- *From the New Zealand Curriculum to School Curriculum* (CD-ROM, item 32632): five digital stories, a customisable presentation, and PDFs of focus material;
- *Assessing Key Competencies: Why Would We? How Could We?* (booklet, item 32926): a discussion of assessment and the key competencies, framed within wider questions about the purposes and outcomes of schooling and education;
- *School Curriculum Design and Review* (pamphlet, item 11334, and wallchart, item 11335): a planning chart and associated review questions.

In a separate mailing, schools have also received *Learning Languages* (poster, item 11282): an overview of the new learning area. An accompanying pamphlet, also called *Learning Languages* (item 11326), describes available resources and sources of professional support.

The above materials, including the items on the CD-ROM, are also available on The New Zealand Curriculum Online website at <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz>

From the New Zealand Curriculum to School Curriculum has been designed to help you review your existing curriculum and consider how to translate the intent of *The New Zealand Curriculum* for your particular contexts. The reflective questions can be used to give focus to this inquiry, particularly in its initial stages.

The accompanying chart *School Curriculum Design and Review* provides a number of useful questions for your consideration. Together, *The New Zealand Curriculum* and the *Design and Review* chart should provide points of reference for your school over the implementation period. The chart has been provided in the following ways:



as a printable PDF file (A4)



in a pamphlet at A3 size



as a poster at A1 size.

The vignettes The contributed vignettes from schools in the footer panels of pages 4–5 and 7–11 are not fully spelled-out case studies but small tasters of the kind of work already under way in schools engaging with *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

Published 2007 for the Ministry of Education by
Learning Media Limited,
Box 3293, Wellington, New Zealand.
www.learningmedia.co.nz

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ISBN 978 0 7903 2631 3
Item number 32631

ISBN 978-0-7903-2631-3





From the New Zealand Curriculum to School Curriculum

The New Zealand Curriculum affirms and retains what is effective and worthwhile in the previous national curriculum. At the same time, taking account of social change and new understandings, it fine-tunes direction. It gives schools greater flexibility to design and implement curriculum that is tailored to the learning needs of their students and the expectations of their communities.

Schools have until 2010 to work towards full implementation. This gives time for clarification, inquiry, exploration, review and decision making and, as an integral part of these processes, full engagement with all those who have an interest in the outcomes, including the students themselves. At an early point in the two-year time frame, each school will need to decide where its developmental priorities lie.

School curriculum design and review involves more than writing a set of statements about the scope and sequence of learning. This process involves:

- inquiring into students' learning needs;
- inquiring into the school's current effectiveness in meeting those needs;
- determining and reaching agreement on the conditions for learning that could strengthen the impact of the school's programmes and practices.

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa

The New Zealand Curriculum is one part of a two-part project; the other is *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. *The New Zealand Curriculum* is the policy statement for English-medium teaching and learning in years 1–13, and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* is the statement for Māori-medium teaching and learning in years 1–13. *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* has been developed in te reo Māori to reflect te ao Māori and the aspirations of Māori.

English-medium schools that also offer Māori-medium programmes may use *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* as the basis for such programmes.

Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, which has been following a different timeline to *The New Zealand Curriculum*, was published mid-November 2007 as a draft for consultation.



The Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Qualifications Authority will be working to align the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) with *The New Zealand Curriculum*. This process is to be completed by the end of 2010.



Factors that determine the shape and quality of a school's curriculum

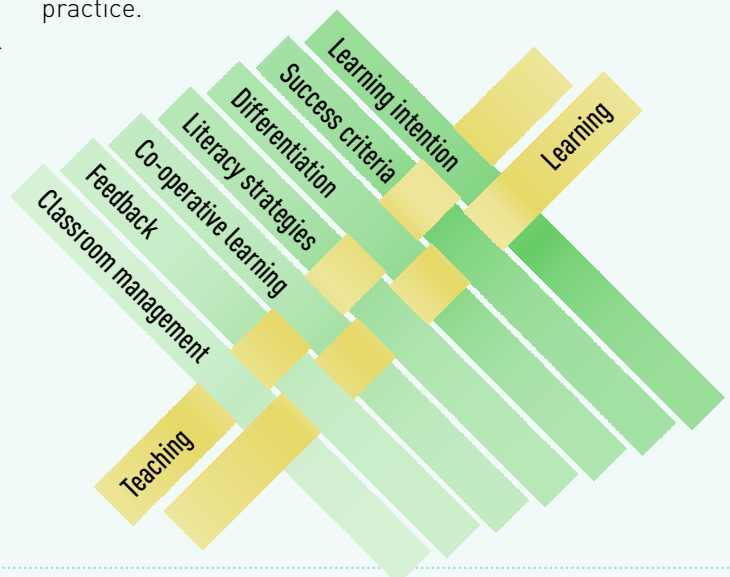
Interpreting *The New Zealand Curriculum* and giving it effect in the school curriculum requires well-informed, thoughtful consideration and decisions. Professional leaders at every level – from principals to classroom teachers – need to take time to clarify and build essential understandings about students' needs and how those needs can best be met. Research by Lester Flockton (Emeritus Director of the Educational Assessment Research Unit of the University of Otago) suggests fourteen factors that schools need to consider through the processes of inquiry, exploration, and review.

1. Collaborative engagement
2. Community confidence in the school, its leadership, its teachers, and its processes
3. A shared vision for students and their learning
4. Understandings about what constitutes meaningful learning
5. Understandings about learners and how meaningful learning happens
6. Understandings about how meaningful learning is meaningfully assessed
7. Structural decisions: subject-based, topic-based, or integrated?
8. Coverage decisions: "mile-wide, inch-deep" versus "inch-wide, mile-deep"?
9. Decisions on how the values, key competencies, and learning areas will interrelate
10. Decisions on emphasis: process versus product?
11. Professional development
12. Resources and resourcefulness
13. Vulnerability to packaged "solutions", posters, and silver bullets
14. The quality of regular self-review and critical reflection.

A high school inquires into effective practice

Wanting to get a better understanding of what constituted effective teaching and learning in their school, the staff of one high school collated all they had learned from the various professional development initiatives they had been involved in over the previous three years. They produced a clear, concise description of each initiative, outlining its purpose and benefits and defining its strategies. They found that all effective initiatives shared common ground, were interrelated and, collectively, strengthened teaching and learning practice in their school. They represented this finding as a tukutuku (woven) panel. Together with supporting documentation, the school's tukutuku panel is displayed in the staffroom as a reminder of the bigger picture and is referred to regularly to help

teachers continue with their learning. The school uses student interviews and student achievement data to monitor the impact of changed teacher practice.





Directions

The purpose of *The New Zealand Curriculum* is to set the direction for student learning in our schools and to provide guidance for schools as they give shape to its intent by the actions they take within their particular contexts. *The New Zealand Curriculum* refers to this process as curriculum design and review.



See pages 6 and 37.

Curriculum design and review should be thought of as a broad process that is led by the school but that involves listening to and taking account of the ideas and concerns of students, families, whānau, and the wider community. These different groups will want to know some of the document's key messages – particularly those that involve shifts in direction or emphasis.



Four key emphases

1

The focus of *The New Zealand Curriculum* is on students and their success. Teaching and learning are attuned to their needs and aspirations. Teaching and learning should deliberately build on the experiences that students bring to school and should expand the possibilities that students see for themselves.



See pages 8–9.

Review questions

- What does success mean for our students? How do we discuss success with them? How does our curriculum support their success?
- What do we know about the circumstances in which our students live? ... about their world? ... about their needs?
- How can our curriculum use to advantage the fact that young people learn from different people and in different contexts?

Developing pedagogical leadership in a secondary school context

The different learning areas found in *The New Zealand Curriculum* are connected via the principles, the values, the key competencies, and effective pedagogy. In one secondary school, the teachers began to explore these connections by examining research into effective teaching and by talking about this research, about how it related to their own classrooms, and about what strategies they might explore. Cross-curricular learning

teams looked for evidence from the students themselves that the new strategies being tried by the teachers were proving effective, as reported. The school found that its professional learning processes were developing a new kind of leader: leaders of pedagogy. These leaders will be important assets as the school takes an inquiry-oriented approach to implementing *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

2

The values and the key competencies have moved to share centre stage with the learning areas. The competencies are fundamental to students' success in every area of life, both present and future. Values largely determine how students "live" the competencies and how the decisions they make impact on others.



See pages 10–13 and 37–38. (The *Assessing Key Competencies* booklet also includes reflective questions.)

Review questions

- How can we develop the values through our school's curriculum?
- How can we develop the key competencies through our school's curriculum?

3

The New Zealand Curriculum recognises that understandings about knowledge, and about how knowledge is formed and acquired, are changing. Students need to know what they are learning and why. They need opportunities to build and examine knowledge, to engage fully with new learning, and to use their new knowledge or learning in unfamiliar contexts.



See pages 16–33 and 34–35.

Review questions

- What kinds of knowledge help our students to understand and interact with our twenty-first-century world?
- How does our school's curriculum help students to construct, examine, and use this knowledge?
- How well does our school's curriculum reflect the essential nature of each learning area?



Refer to and consider the learning area statements on pages 18–33.

- How does our curriculum enable students to explore relationships of knowledge across learning areas?

4

The New Zealand Curriculum emphasises the importance of effective pedagogy and inquiry into teaching and learning practice: schools need to identify those students for whom current practice is not having the desired impact and to actively investigate alternative practice that could be more effective. Teachers can use evidence from research linked to student outcomes and from their own and colleagues' past practice to design effective teaching and learning opportunities.



See pages 34–35.

Review questions

- What are our school's particular strengths in supporting the learning of every student effectively?
- What evidence do we use to identify our school curriculum's effectiveness in supporting the sustained progress of all students?
- What are our school's priorities for future action to support the learning of every student?



Engaging the community

Students learn anywhere, at any time, and from anyone. This has implications for school curriculum design. It means that, as well as teachers, students, families, whānau, and the wider community must be involved in the process of designing curriculum – *The New Zealand Curriculum* assumes that schools will seek out and listen to the ideas and concerns of these different groups.



See, for example, pages 9 and 10.

In this way, the interests and needs of the students and the resources of the wider community become important ingredients of curriculum design. Student and community involvement supports the crucial leadership roles of principal, senior staff, and teachers.

Engagement can be thought of as having two phases: one initial, the other continuing. In the first phase, the principal/curriculum leader leads a participatory process: “What should we do and how?” In the second, they look for ongoing student and community engagement: “How are we going?”

Review questions

Phase one: Leading participation in the design and review of the school’s curriculum

- What roles should our teachers, our students, our families, our whānau, and our wider community play in the design and review of our curriculum?
- What vital information can we set out to gather, and how can we use it for curriculum decision making?

Phase two: Developing processes for involvement and feedback that can be sustained in the longer term

- What processes can we use to stimulate interest in, and get feedback on, our curriculum, its impact, and its relevance?
- How will we assure students and the community that their feedback is valued and used?

A teacher inquiry into the meaning of the key competencies

The teachers in one school agreed to spend six weeks thinking about the key competencies and their implications for their own lives. They began by reading about the key competencies (as described in *The New Zealand Curriculum: Draft for Consultation 2006*) and thinking about people who consistently modelled each of them. Next, the teachers each wrote a rich description of what an adult who demonstrated the competencies might be like and assessed themselves against this

description. Each teacher also asked two people (one a colleague, the other someone from outside the school) to give them feedback. Using this feedback together with their own self-assessment, the teachers each set themselves one goal relating to one of the competencies. They used this inquiry to inform their thinking about how they might introduce the key competencies to their students and about what the implications of the key competencies were for future teaching.



Focal points

The *Design and Review* chart accompanying this booklet (pamphlet and poster versions) is a tool that can be used in conjunction with *The New Zealand Curriculum* to help visualise, plan, and monitor the design and review process throughout the implementation period.

You may find it useful to put the poster version in a prominent place in the staffroom and refer to it regularly. Each question on the chart can be asked at any point over the two years of implementation, and the changing responses to the questions will be a measure of progress.

The following review questions are phrased for use at an initial staff meeting or a meeting with any group of people who are unfamiliar with the document. They are designed to get participants to have a preliminary look at the different sections of *The New Zealand Curriculum* and to think about them in relation to current practice.

Review questions

Vision

- What is our current vision for our students and their learning? Is it clear and widely shared?
- How does our school vision reflect the aspirations and identities of the different groups in our community?
- How similar are our school vision and the vision found in *The New Zealand Curriculum*? What are the significant differences?



See page 8.

Developing a school vision

Central Southland Primary School developed its own vision for its students through the combined engagement of the staff, board of trustees, and community. The statement they arrived at sits at the front of their charter:

This particular vision, which was developed and is owned by Central Southland Primary School, is consistent with the vision expressed in *The New Zealand Curriculum*: the two statements are complementary. The school doesn't need to change its direction or its statement.

***Vision
for our children
at Central Southland Primary School***

Through our influence, example and persistent efforts, we aim to help our students to:

- have and realise their own goals and dreams for a satisfying life
- recognise and pursue opportunities that help enrich their own lives and the lives of others
- have the confidence to face challenges and take risks.

Confident

Connected

Actively
involved

Lifelong learners

«Review questions

Values

- Has our school articulated a set of values that we model and encourage? If so, how widely known and shared are they?
- How do our school values (whether formally articulated or not) support and complement those identified in *The New Zealand Curriculum*?



See page 10.

Key competencies

- What do we know and understand about the key competencies and what they might mean for our students and our school?



See pages 12–13 and 37–38.

- Can we see opportunities within our current structures and practice for developing the key competencies?

Giving meaning to thinking: A possible approach

One school began to explore the relevance of thinking competencies, and to localise their meaning, by engaging students and their families and whānau in

a common homework task. This task was the single focus of homework for an entire week.

Your homework this week is to think and talk about thinking. It's mainly a talking-about-it-with-someone-else kind of homework.

So you'll need to work with at least one other person at home.

Three homework questions about thinking:

- How will it help me if I get to be a really good thinker?
- What things will I need to get good at to be a really good thinker?
- How will I know that I am getting to be a really good thinker?

With the help of someone else at home, write down what you decide. Back at school, everyone will share their ideas and we will try to decide what thinking competencies our school should be helping everyone to learn and use.

Review questions

Learning areas

- Comparing the learning area statements in *The New Zealand Curriculum* (pages 16–33) with the current curriculum documents for each learning area, which statements appear to have undergone most change? What significant changes can we note?



See pages 16–33.

- Given the introduction of learning languages as a new learning area, what do we need to do to increase the profile of languages in our school and give students the opportunity to learn another language?



See page 24.

Principles

- Which of the eight principles in *The New Zealand Curriculum* could we justifiably say are foundations of our current school curriculum?
- Which of these eight principles will require priority consideration as we design and review our curriculum?



See page 9.

Reporting Māori student achievement

Each year, our school/kura reports to parents on achievement in the two core areas of literacy and numeracy. The turnout is always great.

We use the reporting back as a platform to discuss and showcase a particular curriculum area or aspect; last year it was poetic writing, with artefacts of children's work on display. Teachers explained the process and the product. This year, we will showcase thinking skills.

We have found it a fascinating exercise to show parents and whānau the aspirations (unidentified) of our Māori students and then ask them to guess

which of the stated aspirations is their child's. One parent said: "All we want is that our child reads, writes, and does maths well." I replied, "I know – that's why I asked the kids about their aspirations, not the whānau!" A survey revealed that a lot of non-Māori parents would appreciate a similar opportunity.

It will come as no surprise that the most successful way of notifying parents/whānau about hui is to make personal contact, talk about the purpose of the hui, and then follow up with reminders. Preferably by phone or – even better – face to face/kanohi ki te kanohi.



References

Ministry of Education (2000). *Better Relationships for Better Learning: Guidelines for Boards of Trustees and Schools on Engaging with Māori Parents, Whānau, and Communities*. Wellington: Learning Media. Item number 23848. See pages 28–30 for the section Increasing Māori Participation in Schools: a Self-review Framework; the framework is also available online at www.minedu.govt.nz/index.cfm?layout=document&documentid=4231&indexid=8734&indexparentid=1063&goto=00-11#TopOfPage

Ministry of Education (2007a). *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa: He tauira hei kōrerorero*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education (2007b). *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.



Acknowledgments

The Ministry of Education wishes to acknowledge the many people who have contributed to this booklet, particularly Lester Flockton for the section Factors that Determine the Shape and Quality of a School's Curriculum.



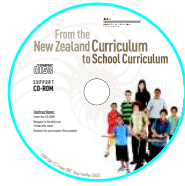
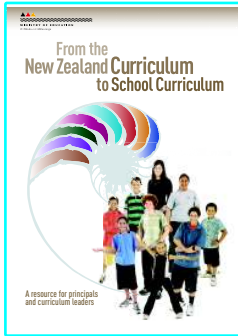
Stimulating teacher understanding of the key competencies

The teachers in one school were encouraged to engage with the key competencies and to discuss their findings with each other. They shared ideas across the school intranet, developing a pool of resources that included planning and assessment templates, examples of student work, and photos. Hard copies of these resources were placed in clear files in the staffroom. These “coffee table books” were used to stimulate conversation, provide

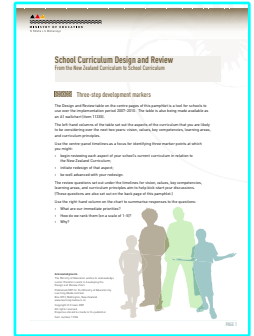
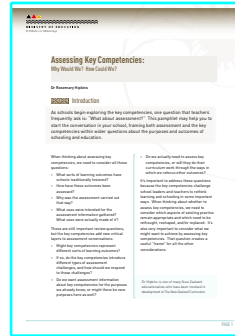
induction support, and keep the key competencies in the foreground. Teachers tried ideas out, shared learning, and engaged in in-depth discussions of their beliefs about learning. They came to realise that the key competencies were as much about themselves as about the students: that the competencies were, in fact, integral to the whole teaching and learning process.



Supporting *The New Zealand Curriculum*



- Digital stories; customisable presentation; PDFs of focus material



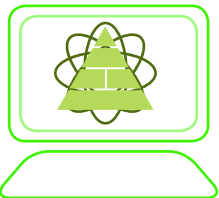
From the New Zealand Curriculum to School Curriculum

- Key considerations for engaging with the NZC; reflective questions; brief examples



The New Zealand Curriculum Online

- Redesigned one-stop online community; continuing to evolve to fully support the NZC
- <http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz>



LeadSpace

- Key source for principals, including leadership advice and examples
- www.leadspace.govt.nz

In-school support through School Support Services*

Support from sector leaders

Post-launch workshops

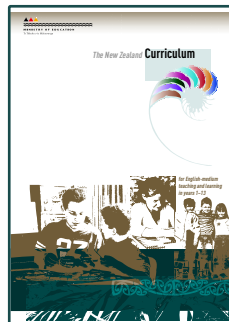
Other in-school professional development including ICT, ATOL, literacy, and numeracy

Assessing Key Competencies

- Booklet unpacking the key competencies in a broader assessment context

School Curriculum Design and Review

- Pamphlet including a planning chart (A3) and associated review questions



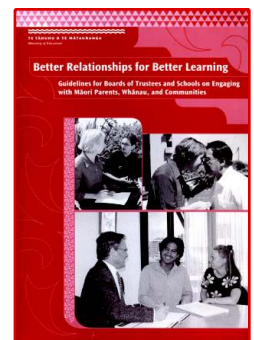
The New Zealand Curriculum

- Setting the direction for student learning
- Providing guidance for schools as they design and review their curriculum

Year	Marker 1	Marker 2	Marker 3
2007	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan
2008	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan
2009	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan
2010	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan	Developing a school curriculum plan

School Curriculum Design and Review

- Planning wallchart (A1)



Better Relationships for Better Learning

- Includes a self-review tool for building Māori participation



Supporting Professional Practice

- Support pack: ideas to help schools integrate successful strategies into what happens for learners



Sustaining Development

- Support pack: materials and advice to support schools in reviewing their progress and making longer-term plans

Key: the NZC: *The New Zealand Curriculum for English-medium Teaching and Learning in Years 1–13*.
Better Relationships for Better Learning: See References section for details.

* General contact details for School Support Services are available from www.tki.org.nz/r/governance/prof_learn/providers_e.php