

Keira Whitaker

Birthday:

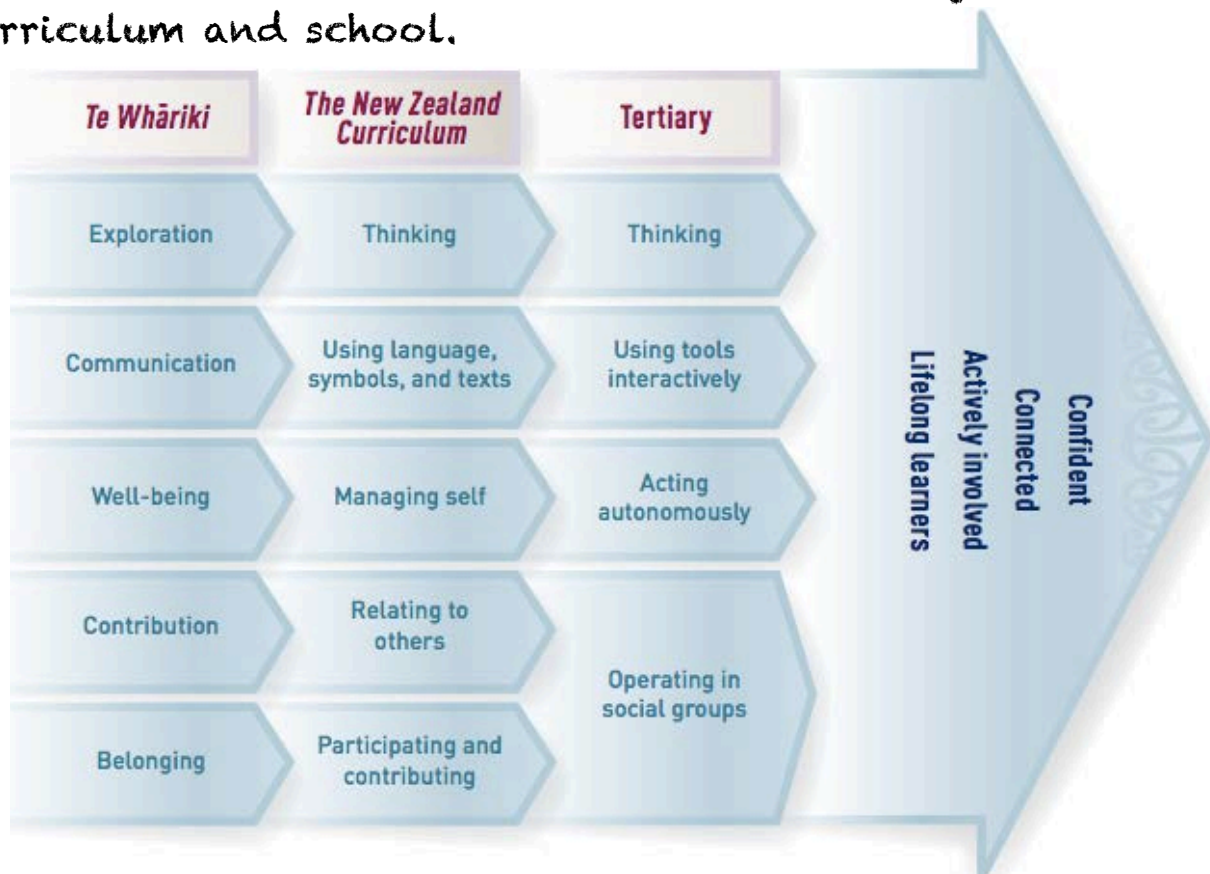


Keira, you are starting your next learning journey at Greenpark School and your teachers at Greerton Early Childhood Centre want to celebrate your learning journey.

We have linked some of your Learning Story narrative assessments, showing your learning progress, to The NZ School Curriculum to support your transition to Greenpark.

We hope you will keep this at school to show your teachers and your friends the many dispositions and skills that make you the competent, capable learner you are.

This diagram shows the links between the early childhood curriculum and school.



Early childhood learning

Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa, the curriculum for early childhood education, provides children with a foundation for ongoing learning.

It is based on four principles: Empowerment, Holistic Development, Family and Community, and Relationships.

Te Whāriki includes five curriculum strands: Exploration – Mana Aotūroa, Communication – Mana Reo, Well-being – Mana Atua, Contribution – Mana Tangata, and Belonging – Mana Whenua.

Together, they provide a foundation for lifelong learning. These strands correspond to the key competencies identified in this document.

NZ School Curriculum, p. 41

Learning in years 1–6

The transition from early childhood education to school is supported when the school:

- fosters a child's relationships with teachers and other children and affirms their identity;
- builds on the learning experiences that the child brings with them;
- considers the child's whole experience of school;
- is welcoming of family and whānau.

This new stage in children's learning builds upon and makes connections with early childhood learning and experiences. Teaching and learning programmes are developed through a wide range of experiences across all learning areas, with a focus on literacy and numeracy along with the development of values and key competencies. NZ School Curriculum, p. 41

Directions for Learning

Vision

Young people who will be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.

Values

Excellence;
Innovation, inquiry,
and curiosity;
Diversity;
Equity;
Community and
participation;
Ecological
sustainability;
Integrity;
Respect.

Key Competencies

Thinking;
Using language,
symbols, and texts;
Managing self;
Relating to others;
Participating and
contributing.

Learning Areas

English;
The arts;
Health and physical
education;
Learning languages;
Mathematics and
statistics;
Science;
Social sciences;
Technology.
Official languages

Achievement Objectives

Principles

High expectations, Treaty of Waitangi, Cultural diversity,
Inclusion, Learning to learn, Community engagement,
Coherence, Future focus

Key Competency Thinking:



Te Whāriki Strand:
Exploration
Mana Aotūroa

How puzzling!



Keira, when you arrived this morning you found some newly donated puzzles on our table. After saying goodbye to mum, you became quickly engrossed in the puzzles.

What I saw in you today:
Keira, I was struck by how absorbed you were in the task you set yourself. You found a puzzle that had many different options for it to fit together. You found three ways it could be done and each one displayed a different, colourful pattern.

This type of puzzle offered a space in which you could engage in problem solving, lateral-thinking and mathematical concepts of size, proportion and shape.

Your ability to stay focused and to persevere with this one puzzle was fabulous my friend. You had determined your own learning path; you wanted to discover the many possibilities this puzzle held. When you were satisfied with your research you went on to

explore what the next puzzle offered, and the next.

It was inspiring to watch you Keira, and wonderful to see the satisfaction you got from completing what you had set out to investigate. Your staying power inspired your friends to join you at the task also. Working with and alongside others is such an important role in extending our own, and the learning of others.

Ka rawe e hoa!
Your friend Wendy



Key Competency: Using Language, symbols and text



Te Whāriki Strand:
Communication
Mana Reo

Keira lends a hand.



Sometimes you just have to wait your turn when there are so many children wanting to participate in the exciting adventures we have in the centre, but fortunately there is always a way to ensure that no-one misses out. Lists! You will find them all over the place. By the rock climbing wall, at the bungy, by the swings and many more places when needed. They are our way of getting through the day without frantic, unsettled waiting. Whenever you find a list and you are keen to have a go all you have to do is add your name/mark and someone will come and find you when it's your turn. This means that you can move off to something else secure in the knowledge that nobody misses out. Lists have another very important quality too...one that we value immensely. They encourage literacy with purpose. Whether you are two or five, making your mark becomes an important part of your day. Experimenting with text then becomes part of your daily practice, and we all know that the more you practice the more confident you become.

Just weeks away from school, with years of meaningful practice under her belt, Keira now has all the confidence and competence she needs to be an expert writer. Today while adding her name to the rock climbing list, Tessa stood next to her watching. "I want a turn next", she told Keira. "Yeah, you can write your name after me", Keira told Tessa. "But I don't know how to", Tessa said. "I know the letters but I don't know how to write them. "I can do it for you Tessa, just tell me the letters", Keira replied. So, that's exactly what happened. Tessa told Keira which letters to write and Keira wrote each one on the list. They might not have got Tessa's name spelt exactly right but that's not the point of this story. The point is in the intention. Keira was able to take on this challenge because she has experimented with writing to the point where she feels safe to take on the challenge of writing for her peers. How fantastic Keira!

Over the coming weeks we will seek Keira out as an expert and extend her leadership skills by encouraging her to support her friends. At the same time she will be showing them that literacy is fun!
Arohanui, Melissa

Teacher: Melissa

Date: 31st October 2011

Key Competency Managing Self:



Te Whāriki Strand: Well Being
Mana Atua

GETTING CREATIVE



The children have been very busy in Te Whare Aotūroa over the past couple of weeks creating soft cuddly toys to call their own! Keria was very excited by the process, so she eagerly drew a plan for the soft toy that she wanted to make and joined the list of children who were keen to have a go on the sewing machine. Sewing is a timely project, requiring of the designer a strong sense of patience and perseverance. While these are habits of mind that Keria will keep practicing, I noticed throughout this process that she has been working hard to focus herself on the task at hand. She cut around her design, working carefully with the scissors and listened attentively while using the sewing machine. We had great difficulty turning her toy back in the right way, learning that it is best to have separate pieces to sew when the design is complicated. Adding the stuffing was lots of fun and hand sewing on the head required some support. Keira then set about adding the eyes, mouth and decorations, all of which she cut and glued with independence.



What learning is happening here for Keira?

Learning to manage one's impulsivity is difficult. When you are passionate about something it is hard to slow things down and appreciate the process rather than the end result. I'm proud of Keira for her work on this project. She was so very keen to see her design take form that early on she found it difficult to wait. Over time however she began to understand that this process would take time and lots of effort on her behalf. Her very fabulous creation is a credit to her perseverance but also to her creativity. She is now the proud owner of a very, very special cuddly toy of her very own!

Kapai Keira, from your friend Melissa

6/4/11

Growth Mindset



"In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment. Virtually all great people have had these qualities."

Carol Dweck - mindsetonline.com

In Te Whare Aot! roa we have a wooden figure that stands on a plinth. This figure is available for the children to use when visualising the human form in their art. I had moved it to the table for a moment while I was shifting something else and Keira was very interested in its purpose. A group of children stopped to listen in on our discussion so I

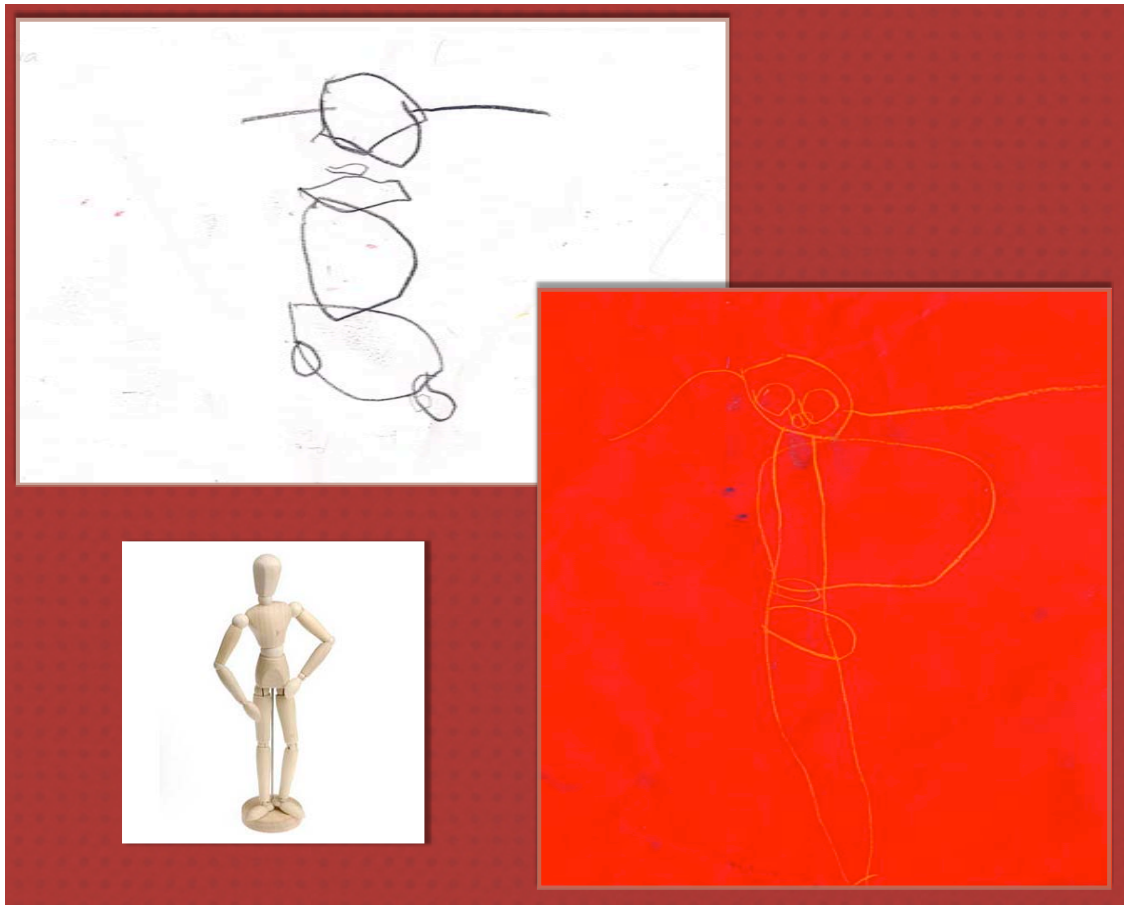
showed them how the arms and legs could move to the shape the artist wanted to draw. We discussed the different parts of the body and when I asked the children if they were interested in having a go everyone moved on except for Keira who quickly found a piece of paper and a pencil.

Working independently, Keira soon had a head,

neck, upper torso, lower torso, arms and legs on her figure. She stopped after she made each addition to the sketch, studied the figurine and decide on the next shapes needed.

Soon Keira had her first figure finished and she moved on to a second. Once again she worked with great concentration.





What learning happened here for Keira?

The teachers at Greerton have been very interested in the theories of Carol Dweck for some time now. Day by day we see examples of her research in the work we do with the children here at Mitchell St, and recently Lorraine had the opportunity to speak at a Carol Dweck conference in the UK. She took with her the stories of Greerton's children, and their willingness to grow their intelligence by stretching and challenging their ever curious minds.

Carol Dweck calls this a "Growth Mindset"; where one views their intelligence as an ever-expanding repertoire of skills and knowledge.

Today I saw this disposition to be challenged in Keira. Her curiosity to notice and be interested in the figure opened up the possibility to be a learner in a new situation and I think this is fabulous. Her willingness is even more interesting when we note that the other children in the room backed away from the challenge..... for various reasons perhaps..... but Keira was not influenced by them. She showed that she is the master of her own learning. Keira showed courage, independence and great mathematical skills as she drew her figures and I'm interested to see where this work leads her next. I wonder if she will continue to refine her drawings of figurines?

Teacher: Melissa Osmond

Date: August 2010

Key Competency Relating to Others:



Te Whāriki Strand: Contribution
Mana Tanagata

FRIENDS



As new children settle into this environment we work hard to establish safe and meaningful relationships that allow them to stretch and grow their confidence. Today as I settled Ember into the morning we noticed Keira and Tullulah working busily with the small sorting animals. When I asked Ember if she would like to come and investigate what they were up to she was very curious to know of their plan. We listened keenly to the story about their play and asked if Ember might be able to join in. "Of course you can Ember", said Keira enthusiastically. "Here are some animals for you, come and help".

This was all Ember needed to feel welcome and she joined in their game straight away. As they worked the girls chatted about what animals they were putting on and laughed out loud if an animal fell down the cracks. Keira and Tullulah were full of compliments and warm conversation and soon Ember was fully immersed in the moment.

What learning is happening here for Keira?

Keira, I could write story after story about your kindness and willingness to be a resourceful role-model if only I had the time! Over the past few months you have become my right hand helper, always willing to take on responsibility or care for others if they are sad. The way you embrace and empower the other children by including them in your play is commendable! This inclusiveness is more meaningful to our new friends than you might know as a four year old. As experienced citizens (well just old!) of this world however, these moments of Kotahitanga (unity) are valued for the richness that they bring us all, and we thank you for your efforts and time in contributing to our whanau.

Arohanui,
Melissa

Key Competency Participating and Contributing:



Te Whāriki Strand: Belonging
Mana Whenua

“KARAKIA MEGAN!”



Keira reminds me of our tradition the tikanga of karakia

PRELUDE: For over a year now we have been practicing a karakia at morning and afternoon tea times, and also at lunch. It is said to acknowledge and give thanks to the Atua (Maori Gods/Guardians) that provide us with natural, healthy kai to nourish our bodies and minds. The karakia came about after discussions revealed, we as a group, wanted to work towards greater understanding of te reo and tikanga Māori. We, as kaiako (teachers and learners), decided to make this our research focus for 2009. Understanding the love and respect Māori have for the natural world we felt that a karakia, to help us recognise and pay tribute to the Atua of food, would be an appropriate tikanga to introduce to the culture that already exists here at Greerton. With our vege' garden well under way, and having had fruit trees transplanted into our front yard, we felt that exploring the spiritual elements of tikanga Māori, in regards to food, would be a relevant place to start our work towards greater understanding with our children. This tikanga would naturally encourage the research, learning and respect surrounding kai that had already begun here for our learning community.

So as we would with any thing we wished to share with our tamariki, we introduced this karakia gently. We took a moment, each meal time, to stop and quietly gather ourselves, we said karakia aloud, explained to our young friends why and what we were saying, and simply carried on. Of course this provoked questions and comments from the children, and much discussion around our karakia filled our kai tables. Gradually as days went on the children came to see the example we had offered, and they encouraged us to say our thanks at each meal. Some friends would run off to the kitchen to find the karakia for us and bring it to the table. Others began mumbling the words as we read it aloud, in an effort to learn them and practice their pronunciation. All in all, the karakia became an invited and embraced part of what we do here when we eat. Many friends now stop eating while we say karakia, some even put their food down, or wait for respects to be said before they begin eating. All of which has been of their own initiative. Some of our friends may do a similar thing at home or in the households of their family members, and so have brought their prior experiences to our tables with them. Either way, we have all come to a place where we want to show gratitude for the food we are blessed with. Most importantly, we wish to do so in such a way that we are acknowledging the spiritual and cultural beliefs of the people of Aotearoa, in the language that is quiet simply an outward expression of their treasured tikanga.

THE STORY: Keira my friend, you have always been interested in the karakia that we have begun saying as we sit down to eat together, at Mitchell St. I noticed you stop and watch my mouth say each word when we first began this tradition, while I was crouched down beside you and your friends reciting this prayer. At times when I'd get caught up in the business of organising space, and

Karakia mō te Kai
Kua horahia te kai
Nā ngā Atua i homai
Tānemāhuta
Haumiatiketike
Rongomatāne
Tangaroa
Kia ora

helping young friends with drink bottles and lunch boxes, it was your voice that I'd hear reminding me, "Karakia Megan! We haven't said karakia," you would point out to me. "We need to say karakia." "Ae (yes), my friend!" I would say in reply, thankful for your memory! It was fabulous to have someone so helpful to keep me in check in our early stages of practicing this food blessing! You seemed mindful of the value of our new tradition Keira, and were obviously quite aware as to when was an appropriate time to practice it! Wā kai (food time)!

Now, after all your practice, you are one of our friends who can say this karakia aloud and on your own. Proudly too I might add! It has been such a pleasure to witness how confidently you took on the challenge of learning not only a new language but also a new tikanga for our Mitchell St whānau Keira. You have completely embraced the tradition we have introduced here and as a result, many of your friends are following the fabulous example you set, at the table. They see how important it is to you, to take a moment to say karakia and they hear how well you have learnt the words. Watching you Keira, inspires them to do the same. Thank you for your persistence and encouragement friend! We can keep practicing and helping others in their practice, together!
Arohanui Megan-darling xxx



Food Blessing

This food has been laid
out before us
Given to us by
Tānemāhuta God of the
Forest
Haumiatiketike God of
Cultivated Foods
Rongomatāne God of
Kumara and Peace
Tangaroa God of the Sea
Thank you all