

Editorial

## The whole child and the whole teacher within the dynamics of the place – here and beyond.

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Welcome to the 30<sup>th</sup> edition of He Kupu, to celebrate this milestone we invited submissions on the theme of *The whole child and the whole teacher within the dynamics of the place – here and beyond*. The articles in this special issue explore the meaning of holism and its role in supporting children’s learning and development. A theme common to many of the articles is the examination of connections, within oneself, to others and to the natural environment. We also include in this issue, a focus on the barriers and support for Pasifika learners and disabled kaiako in early childhood settings.

Our 30<sup>th</sup> edition begins with a commentary from Professor Colin J. Gibbs who sets the scene by contesting conventional perceptions of holism and self. The readers are invited to reflect on the meaning of our connections within ourselves, each other, the universe and the implications this has for the relationship between learner and teacher.

The first article in the practitioner research section from Maddie Hendrie and Marjolein Whyte provides a succinct overview of a range of contemporary curriculum approaches in Aotearoa New Zealand. The authors examine the place of holism and consider how it is practised in authentic early childhood settings.

Following this, Tania Du Plessis presents us with a personal narrative of supporting student kaiako in developing their connections to the outdoors in the Hawke’s Bay. Tania reviews the challenges and suggests strategies for when not all learners enjoy being in nature.

Phoebe Tong provides readers with a discussion highlighting both the influence and the positionality of early childhood studies as a discipline. Using childhood studies as a theoretical lens, Phoebe examines questions of children’s agency and advances suggestions for practice that kaiako can adapt to their everyday teaching.

In the final article of this section, Galina Stebletsova and Barbara Scanlan support readers to understand a range of cultural perspectives on holism. With reference to *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 2017), the authors illustrate how beginning kaiako, from a position of openness, can foster positive relationships with all families.

Opening the peer review section, Lynley Tulloch et al. draw on the well-established principles of ecopedagogy as a response to anthropogenic climate change and other socio-environmental issues, to frame a holistic form of early childhood education for sustainability in Aotearoa New Zealand. Vignettes based on the authors’ experiences provide points of critical reflection.

## Editorial

From the Hawke's Bay, Gillian Postlewaight et al. bring a Māori holistic perspective to an initial cycle of an action research project that explores the connections between children and place, and illustrates how new opportunities for teacher learning and challenges were presented.

Following this, Sina Fowler brings to attention issues of racism and barriers to success experienced by Pasifika learners in Aotearoa New Zealand and how this has been addressed through a series of education initiatives. Sina looks at how barriers that prevent success can be mitigated by kaiako in early childhood centres.

This section concludes with Kerry Purdue et al.'s discussion on the inclusion of disabled kaiako in the early childhood sector. The authors document legislative obligations and responsibilities for people with disabilities in Aotearoa New Zealand and examines how this impacts the sector.

The issue closes with two book reviews. The first book, *He atua, he tangata: The world of Māori mythology* is reviewed by Krystal Taiapa who brings to the fore suggestions for early childhood kaiako on how this taonga can be used.

The second book, *Belonging: The science of creating connection and bridging divides* by G. L. Colin is reviewed by Marjolein Whyte, who reflects on the implications of belonging for understandings of empathy.

We hope that this 30<sup>th</sup> edition of *He Kupu* will provide readers with an insight into the importance of holism, its connections to teaching practice in early childhood education and its potential to impact the lives of children and teachers in meaningful ways.

Editorial

**Reference list**

Ministry of Education. (2017). *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Author.