

Build relationships with whānau and others who know the student well

A suggestion for implementing the strategy

'Take a community approach ' from the Guide:

[Inclusive classroom culture](#)

Includes:

- Involve families
- Ideas for working with whānau
- Engage with whānau and iwi
- Listen to families
- Work closely with families
- Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Developing an inclusive classroom culture](#)

Strategy: [Take a community approach](#)

Suggestion: [Build relationships with whānau and others who know the student well](#)

Date

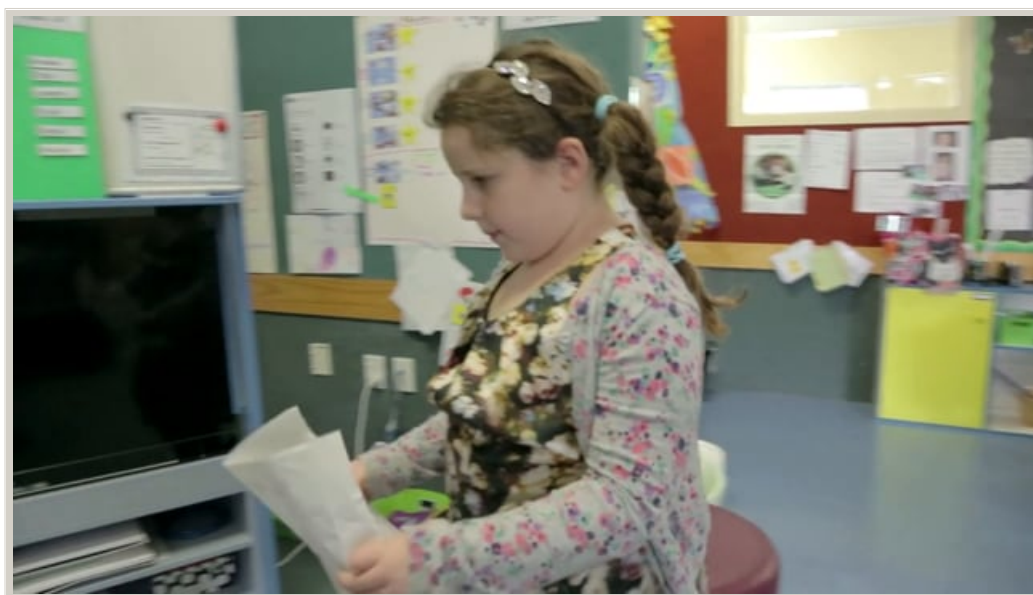
26 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/developing-an-inclusive-classroom-culture/build-relationships-with-whanau-and-others-who-know-the-student-well

Involve families

Linda Ojala describes how families contribute to the class programme.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/100662396>

Closed Captions

Source:

Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos (NZ)

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/2950799>

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Ideas for working with whānau

Suggestions for working closely with parents, caregivers, and whānau.

- ✓ Communicate and share information in ways that work for everyone, for example, social media, playground conversations, email, group text messages, video calls, a notebook, class blog, newsletters with photos.
- ✓ Value parents' and caregivers' knowledge about their child and assessments they have had done out of school.
- ✓ Involve whānau in determining strategies to support student learning and well-being at home and school.
- ✓ Work with programmes or materials parents are using to maximise consistency and support for the student.
- ✓ Share information about out-of-school programmes that may boost self-esteem (for example, groups for music, art, or sporting interests).
- ✓ Recognise areas of expertise and experience and look for opportunities to explicitly value and utilise them in the classroom.

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Engage with whānau and iwi

Strong engagement and contribution from students and those who are best placed to support them – parents and whānau, hapū, iwi, Māori organisations, communities and businesses – have a strong influence on students' success. Māori students' learning is strengthened when education professionals include a role for parents and whānau, hapū, iwi, and Māori organisations and communities in curriculum, teaching and learning.

Source:

[Ka Hikitia – Accelerating success: The Māori education strategy 2013–2017](#), p. 23

<https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/overall-strategies-and-policies/ka-hikitia-ka-hapaitia/ka-hikitia-history/ka-hikitia-accelerating-success-20132017/>

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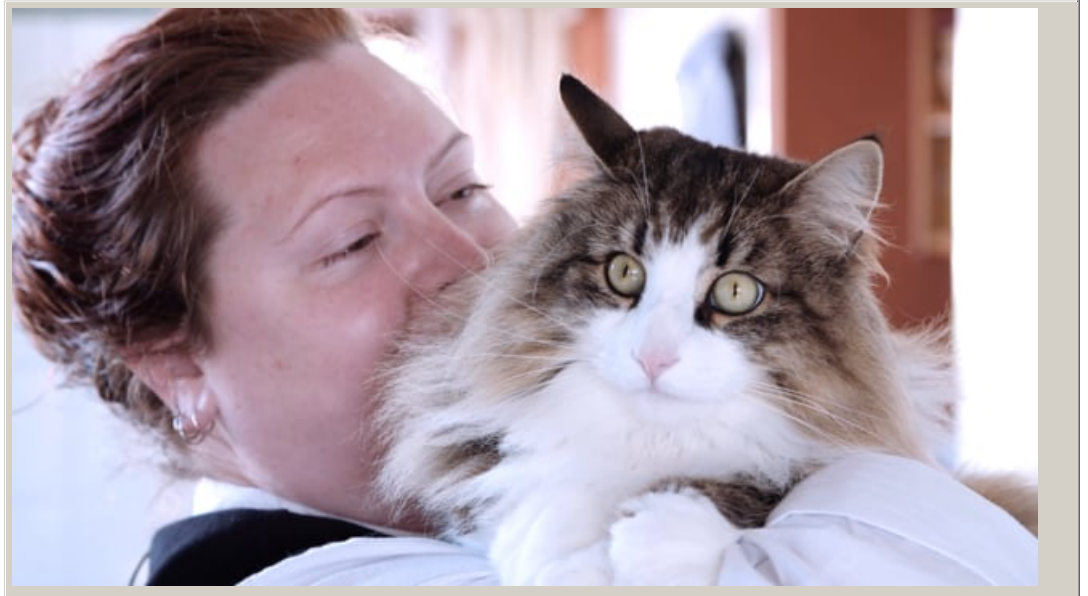
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Listen to families

Parents, Dayna and Phil, found sharing successful approaches and incorporating their daughter's interests reduced anxiety and provided consistency between home and school.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/186358577>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos \(NZ\)](#)
<https://vimeo.com/showcase/2950799>

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Work closely with families

John Robinson describes the impact of working closely with parents and whānau.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/100662411>

Closed Captions

Source:

[Ministry of Education, inclusive education videos \(NZ\)](#)
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Useful resources



Perspectives of whānau

Parents of students needing additional support outline their needs and how schools can best work with them to meet those needs. Key information is from the ERO report *Partners in learning: Parents' voices*. An example of practice from a primary school and discussion questions are provided on this page from the Inclusive Practices website (NZ).

[Visit website](#)



Engaging Pasifika parents and communities

Resources and videos which focus on engagement with parents, families, and communities.

Publisher: Pasifika Education Community

[Visit website](#)



Ka Hikitia – Ka Hāpaitia

Ka Hikitia, the Māori Education Strategy, is a cross-agency strategy for the education sector.

[Visit website](#)

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