

***Fostering professional connections across spaces: An evaluative study of a co-constructed school-based initiative within a Graduate Teacher Education qualification***

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# Initial Teacher Education Context

- International Research in ITE on Effective Practices
  - shared vision of effective teaching
  - clear standards of performance
  - curricular coherence
  - extensive use of high-leverage strategies
  - *extended practice experiences*
  - *strong school-university relationship*
- Challenges of School-University Relationships
  - substance & nature of relationships
  - mutually-beneficial & equal partnerships
- Practice-focused Approach to ITE
  - strengthen relationship of coursework & practice experiences
  - engage with ‘materials’ of teaching to make meaning of core professional concepts

# **Documentary Account of Innovation: Description and Evaluation**

## ***Home School Initiative***

- Introduced a new practice-focused learning component to the revised GradDipTchLn (Primary);
- Co-constructed initiative with CPPA Executive as a specific outgrowth of collaborative partnership;
- Collaborative evaluation process with CPPA as co-researchers to examine outcomes;
- Targeted one of the ‘central tasks’ of professional learning for ITE (Feiman-Nemser, 2001):

***Analysing own beliefs and forming initial visions for teaching,  
including their professional stance as educators.***

# Home School Initiative: Purpose

- Strengthening partnerships between schools
- Providing increased opportunities for students to observe teachers in action, have professional dialogue with teachers and school leaders, and experience working with staff, students and parents/caregivers in a school environment;
- Providing increased opportunities for students to work in a wider variety of schools, and observe/interact with a wider range of children across the different levels of the school;
- Enabling students to make theory-practice connections in the courses they are undertaking in the first semester of study;
- Providing mutually-beneficial support to schools in areas they identify by having the students can support teachers and learners in regular and/or special school activities; and
- Enabling students to ensure they have made the right decision to enter the teaching profession by better experiencing working with staff, students and parents/caregivers in a school environment.

# Home School Initiative: Structure

- Students have 1-day per week for 5 weeks in a school
- Work in pairs
- No set tasks, rather weekly focus questions linked to courses to guide observation and action
- UC staff in PI course prepare students each week for upcoming experience
- Schools engage students in “the life of the school” by developing a weekly plan/schedule; there is no expectation for school staff to conduct assessment
- Schools plan the experience so as to also support their initiatives
- Programme Coordinator and PI staff liaise with each school and serve as key contact as needed

# Summary of Weekly Course Content Overviews

<b>Week in school ( 8:30-3:30 each day)</b>	<b>TEPI331 Professional and Educational Studies 1</b>	<b>TEPI333 Ngā Āhuatanga Māori and Learning Languages</b>	<b>TECP331 English Literacy and Mathematics Education 1</b>	<b>TECP332 Future Focussed Education: Science, Technology, Digital Literacy</b>
<b>Thursday 6 March</b>	Child Development Analytical Observation and questioning in educational settings	<b>LL</b> Working with children from language backgrounds other than English <b>NAM</b> Historical overview te reo Māori, endangered languages, pronunciation and greetings/farewells in te reo Māori	Characteristics of a good maths lesson, beginning pedagogy Conceptions of literacy Literacy in New Zealand	Philosophy and Nature of science and technology. Challenges for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Digital tools and environments
<b>Thursday 13 March</b>	Theories of Learning Culturally responsive pedagogies	<b>LL</b> Language teaching in NZ – an overview <b>NAM</b> Teaching documents for te reo Māori and mihi mihi	Practical applications for Strand teaching- Measurement Phonological awareness for beginning readers	Authentic practice in Science and Technology Models of science and technology Practice Overview of digital literacy and citizenship
<b>Thursday 20 March</b>	Planning for Effective Teaching Assessment for Learning	<b>LL</b> Theories and approaches in second language teaching and learning <b>NAM</b> Second language acquisition strategies for the classroom and actions/commands in te reo	NZC Learning area, Mathematics and supporting materials to aid lesson planning Introduction to Literacy approaches/ Shared Reading	Skills, attitudes and knowledge: Making links to the NZC. Planning a learning pathway 21 <sup>st</sup> century digital tools

# Example Weekly Focus Questions

## **Visit 1: 6 March (NZ Curriculum & Child Development)**

2. In your interactions and observations of students today, make note of the physical, social/emotional and cognitive characteristics of one particular age group. What surprises you? What questions arise? Take a copy of the developmental characteristic pages (junior-middle-senior) from Module 3 with you. Use these to prompt your observations and highlight the characteristics you observe- we will discuss the implications of these)

## **Visit 2: 13 March (Theories of Learning and Culturally Responsive Pedagogies)**

2. What Māori values do you see being encouraged in this school (refer back to *Tātaiako* for the overview) How are these explored, modelled and encouraged within the school? What evidence do you see of how the school actively support students from diverse cultural contexts?

## **Visit 5: 3 April (Classroom and Behaviour Management)**

1. Please have a conversation with a school leader/staff member: what school-wide systems are in place to manage behaviour and how were these established?

# Example Student School Schedule

## Timetable:

	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8	Week 9
8.30-8.45		Sign in; touch base with A for the day/ review questions/focus. Visit Breakfast Club (Week 6)			
8.45-11.10	Meet with Principal/Walk around school with Andrea. <b>Go to Room 2 (JB).</b>	<b>Room 11, Year 5/6 (BL)</b>	<b>Room 3 (VW)</b>	<b>Room 4 NI (DB)</b>	<b>Room 8, Year 3/4 (KW)</b>
11.30-12.45	<b>Room 2 (JB)</b>	<b>Room 11</b>	<b>Room 3</b>	<b>Room 4 (DB)</b>	<b>Room 8</b> Visit Lunch Club with Andrea.
1.30-3.15	<b>Room 2 (JB)</b>  <b>2.30pm</b> Observe Year 3 EOTC with A.	<b>Room 11/Possible visit to Conductive Education.</b>	<i>Wise Up (in the Hall) – Socialization programme for a select group with A.</i>	<b>Room 4 (DB)</b>	<b>Room 8</b>  <b>2.45pm</b> Debrief of visit with A.
3.15-3.30	Touch base with A/ introduce to next week's teacher/s. Sign out.				

# Collaborative Evaluation Framework

- CPPA Executive Team—two members serve as co-researchers
- Survey of Principals in Home Schools
  - Four questions using Survey Monkey
- Data from GradDip Students
  - Learn Site Forum—4 open-ended questions
  - Focus Groups as follow up
- UC Researchers summarise data to remove identifying information
- Shared analysis with CPPA co-researchers
- Report back to all stakeholders (principals, students, staff)

# Evaluation Outcomes To Date

- In process—ethical approval for research involving students requires full review; slower than anticipated
- Feedback from PI and course staff
  - see students making specific links from experiences to course concepts and content
  - Students' discourse appears to shift from concerns for their performance/learning to that of students
  - Have had two students indicate early that teaching not the “right”choice

# Next Steps in Evaluation: Identify Lessons Learned & Revise/Refine

- **Partnership**
  - How does this initiative strengthen relationships?
  - What benefits to schools gain?
- **Practice-focused experience in ITE**
  - How does this 5 week experience contribute to ITE students' ability to link theory to practice?
  - What 'materials of teaching' do they have the opportunity to engage with in these contexts?
- **Centralising task for ITE**
  - What beliefs and ideas about teaching do the ITE students confront and grapple with?
  - How well do the guiding questions scaffold ITE student engagement with challenging concepts and their own beliefs?