

Supporting Social and Emotional Competence in Early Learning

Inquiry and Self-assessment

The information in this resource comes from the book *He Māpuna te Tamaiti: Supporting Social and Emotional Competence in Early Learning*. To read more about reflection, inquiry, and problem solving in early childhood education settings, see section 6 of that resource.

This document is an interactive PDF. Print it to complete a self-assessment by hand, or download it to create an electronic record that you can save, change, and update.

Whole-setting inquiry

The following 'big picture' questions will help your kaiako team to consider the kinds of evidence that could inform an inquiry into how you support the social and emotional growth of tamariki. Such an inquiry can lead to environmental and practice changes aimed at strengthening inclusion, engagement, and learning for all.

- How evident are the values of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga in our early learning culture, environment, policies, and systems?
- How well is our approach to supporting positive behaviour underpinned by culturally responsive pedagogies and practices?
- How inclusive is our early learning context? How well do we foster and communicate inclusive values and practices?
- What is the impact of our current policies and systems on children's behaviour, engagement, and wellbeing?
- How can we strengthen our support when children transition into the early learning environment, between rooms, and out to school?
- Are our approaches to promoting positive behaviour and responding to problem behaviour effective? Are we meeting the needs of all our tamariki? How do we know? Can we do better?
- How intentional are we in supporting children's emerging social and emotional competence?
- How can we improve collaboration and curriculum co-construction with whānau, hapū, and iwi?

Team and individual self-assessment

The remainder of this resource provides a self-assessment tool that supports internal evaluation and that is based on the strategies unpacked in *He Māpuna te Tamaiti*. Using this tool will reinforce the value of reflecting on practice. Such reflection is especially helpful when it is done with colleagues – regular, supportive discussion of teaching practices fosters a collaborative approach and helps kaiako to assess and reflect on their effectiveness as individuals and as a team.

Use the tool to examine your team's practice and the degree to which it includes effective, evidence-based strategies that promote positive behaviour. The tool will also help you as a team to review your physical, social, and learning environment to ensure that it is supportive and inclusive for all tamariki.

You can also use the tool to reflect on your individual practice, possibly in collaboration with a colleague. For example, a colleague can support you to use the tool by observing you and providing specific feedback to help you plan ways to strengthen your practice.

SUPPORTING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE: SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Kaiako:

Date and time:

Observer (if applicable):

Rate your team or yourself for each strategy by checking 'Emerging', 'Partly in place', or 'Embedded'.
(To read about the strategy, see the relevant pages in *He Māpuna te Tamaiti*.)

Teaching approaches & strategies	Kaiako actions that support social and emotional competence
1. Creating a supportive environment	
<p>Establishing a positive climate (<i>He Māpuna te Tamaiti</i>, pages 24–25)</p>	<p>Our relationships with children are warm and caring, reflecting the values of manaakitanga and whanaungatanga.</p> <p>We use a friendly tone and provide positive attention to all children.</p> <p>We show children warmth and provide comfort through physical affection.</p> <p>We communicate with each other in friendly, respectful ways.</p> <p>We ensure arriving and leaving routines are planned, personalised to meet children's needs, pleasant, and unhurried.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Constructing values (page 26)</p>	<p>We co-construct values with whānau or ensure they reflect the established philosophy of our early learning context.</p> <p>We display our values through signage and pictures.</p> <p>We talk with children about our values and how they are expressed in different contexts.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Developing and promoting expectations (page 27)</p>	<p>We have co-constructed behavioural expectations, linked to our values, with children and whānau.</p> <p>We ensure expectations are displayed using words, pictures, and symbols.</p> <p>We help whānau to understand the expectations and to promote them in the early learning setting and at home.</p> <p>We ensure that children can explain the expectations and support one other to meet them.</p> <p>We teach the expectations using intentional pedagogies (e.g., modelling, prompts, reminders).</p> <p>We give children positive feedback as they work towards and meet expectations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>

Teaching approaches & strategies	Kaiako actions that support social and emotional competence
<p>Establishing consistent routines (pages 28–30)</p>	<p>We have co-constructed with children the routines for particular activities.</p> <p>We display and regularly teach the routines.</p> <p>We ensure children receive feedback and encouragement to follow the routines from us and from one another.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Creating a safe and inclusive space (pages 31–32)</p>	<p>We ensure the physical space is welcoming for children and whānau.</p> <p>We organise and display resources to make it easy for children to access, retrieve, and share them.</p> <p>We have a neutral, quiet space available where children can go to calm down if they need to.</p> <p>We ensure visual images and resources reflect and celebrate cultural diversity.</p> <p>We use pictures to document the cultural connections and activities of whānau and the wider community.</p> <p>We make our signage culturally inclusive, using children's home languages.</p> <p>We teach children to use space and resources responsibly and to consider the safety and needs of others.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>2. Promoting emotional competence</p>	
<p>Supporting children to understand, express, and regulate their emotions (pages 37–39)</p>	<p>We talk about feelings with children and support them to name and describe feelings.</p> <p>We notice and give feedback to children when they demonstrate self-regulation (e.g., by waiting their turn, sharing with others, using a strategy to calm down).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Helping children build resilience and a sense of self-worth (pages 40–43)</p>	<p>We give children positive feedback that affirms their developing skills and competencies.</p> <p>We prepare children for changes by talking about feelings triggered by change and inspiring confidence about managing change.</p> <p>We positively acknowledge children's attempts and approximations when they are working towards meeting behavioural expectations.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Providing positive guidance during heightened emotions (pages 44–45)</p>	<p>We provide appropriate support and guidance when children are experiencing heightened emotions.</p> <p>We model strategies for managing emotions (e.g., calming down, using positive self-talk).</p> <p>We check in with children when they have calmed down, helping them to talk about their feelings and strategies for managing their emotions in the future.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>

Teaching approaches & strategies	Kaiako actions that support social and emotional competence		
3. Promoting social competence			
Fostering peer friendships and interactions (pages 53–57)	<p>We support children to positively notice each other, to initiate play, and to respond to invitations to interact from peers.</p> <p>We talk about and model friendly play.</p> <p>We provide praise and encouragement when children demonstrate their developing social skills (e.g., by using a friendly voice, waiting for a turn, sharing, inviting others to join in).</p> <p>We support children with the social behaviours needed for group interactions (e.g., listening to others, taking turns to talk).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		
Supporting children to care for and empathise with others (pages 58–59)	<p>We notice and affirm children's caring behaviour towards others who are upset.</p> <p>We support children to understand the impact of their behaviour on others.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		
Helping children support others in their learning (pages 60–61)	<p>We enable and support tuakana–teina relationships.</p> <p>We ensure that tuākana have opportunities to take leadership roles.</p> <p>We create opportunities for children to teach each other.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		
Helping children solve social problems during peer conflict (pages 62–64)	<p>We take a preventative approach by establishing clear behavioural expectations and boundaries.</p> <p>We teach children problem-solving skills that help them avoid or work through conflict situations.</p> <p>We are aware of specific situations that may create conflict and help children to prepare for these.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		

Teaching approaches & strategies	Kaiako actions that support social and emotional competence		
4. Supporting learning and engagement			
<p>Supporting children to manage their learning (pages 69–71)</p>	<p>We have extended interactions with children about their plans, projects, and experiences.</p> <p>We notice and give feedback to children when they demonstrate self-managing learning behaviours (e.g., perseverance, resilience, problem solving).</p> <p>We provide positive forecasting to help children expect a good outcome from using self-managing strategies.</p> <p>We motivate children to extend and challenge themselves.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		
<p>Providing rich and varied learning opportunities (pages 72–73)</p>	<p>We draw on the wider community and environment to create a rich and stimulating curriculum and contexts for learning.</p> <p>We ensure that activity areas are inviting and intriguing, with a balance of continuity and change.</p> <p>We ensure that there are opportunities for physically active play.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		
<p>Removing barriers to participation, engagement, and learning (pages 74–75)</p>	<p>We limit tidy up times to allow children to engage with complex tasks.</p> <p>We ensure routines are inclusive, supportive, and helpful.</p> <p>We take a flexible approach to how and where resources can be used.</p> <p>We reflect on and make changes to policies or practices that create confusion for children or whānau.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		
<p>Supporting transitions (page 76)</p>	<p>We prepare children and provide reminders ahead of routine, daily transitions.</p> <p>We use visual cues and rituals to support routine transitions and make them fun.</p> <p>We offer choices that support children's agency during transitions.</p> <p>We support children to prepare for major transitions by providing additional attention and by positively framing the potential outcomes of the change.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>		

Teaching approaches & strategies	Kaiako actions that support social and emotional competence
5. Understanding behaviour	
<p>Knowing about behaviour</p>	<p>Through observation, we endeavour to understand the communicative purpose of a child's behaviour.</p> <p>We understand that positive behaviour can be learned and problem behaviour can be unlearned.</p> <p>We actively support and teach positive social behaviour in both planned and incidental ways.</p> <p>We identify children who need additional support and agree on strategies to help them in collaboration with their whānau.</p> <p>We use strength-based, objective, respectful language to describe children's behaviour.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Responding to problem behaviour</p>	<p>We respond to problem behaviour in calm, caring, and consistent ways.</p> <p>Our responses to problem behaviour are mana-enhancing and preserve the dignity of all involved.</p> <p>We give children feedback about their behaviour and reminders about boundaries and expectations.</p> <p>We provide fair, logical consequences for problem behaviour.</p> <p>We ignore minor problem behaviour if it is safe to do so.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>
<p>Supporting positive behaviour</p>	<p>We reinforce positive behaviour by noticing children's efforts and providing feedback and encouragement.</p> <p>We redirect children when we notice that their behaviour is escalating.</p> <p>We actively teach children strategies to self-regulate and self-manage their behaviour.</p> <p>We encourage children to support each other to manage their behaviour.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Emerging Partly in place Embedded</p>

Now continue to the next page to plan your next steps.

Next steps

Look through your responses above.

What are our strengths? *(800 characters)*

What are our areas for development? *(800 characters)*

How can we improve our practice? *(800 characters)*

Do we need help? If so, from whom? *(450 characters)*

Could this improvement form part of an individual or collaborative team inquiry? *(450 characters)*