

Raurimu Avenue Primary School



Raurimu Ave School has been “stretching out” to whānau because they believe a school is **a community of learners** which goes wider than the students.



Working with whānau will enable better results for the children and all of society.

How did it happen?

Raurimu Ave School has employed a Kaiarahi (guide or mentor) in the school to work with whānau and students. The Kaiarahi supports the parent(s) and the child in their learning, health, engagement and Te Ao Māori.

The School has partnered with the J R McKenzie Trust to employ the Kaiarahi who works with some of the school's hardest to reach families. This dedicated role has been instrumental in supporting change. The Kaiarahi's work is turning a built-up culture of disengagement around by: walking alongside families turning all situations into a learning conversation; being there for them when things go wrong; helping whānau to become more involved with the school; staying 'one step ahead of their children giving the parents a feeling of self-pride. The Kaiarahi drops in and visits parents at home and she works with children in the classroom.

Parents feel more empowered and motivated to help their kids, through working with the Kaiarahi. There is no negativity, and most importantly there is no judgement.

What has changed

There is a healthy vibe in the school and this flows through to children. Positive behavioural changes in children, improvements in their self-image and more families participating in Raurimu Ave's events, such as the school play, are some of the changes noticed since the Kaiarahi started. There's also encouraging data:

- Student attendance rates have improved
- More whānau (especially those who have never previously come to appointments) are now attending appointments with teachers.
- In terms of National Standards, children have moved from 'well below' to 'below', or from 'below' to 'at'.



The Kaiarahi works with students in class



Parents feel motivated to help their kids



Student attendance rates have increased

The community of parents and whānau have grown to trust the Kaiarahi and the school.



What's been learned

- An excellent relationship between the core funder (J R Mckenzie Trust) and the School has seeded the success. The freedom to work with people in ways that was needed – as opposed to a set criteria-has enabled and empowered the school to do what was needed. There was no pressure to meet preconceived milestones.



- Employing the right person for the Kaiarahi role. Raurimu Avenue's 'J R Worker' a local resident and a positive and bubbly person. All the work is face to face, so relationships are vital. The community of parents and whānau have grown to trust the Kaiarahi and the school.
- Primary schools are important places for social change. Rather than a social service delivery focus, parents benefit from having a trusted person believe in them and instill a sense of self-belief.
- Being positive and non-judgmental is key. It is important that there is no stigma attached to receiving help and support from the Kaiarahi.
- The effects of the Kaiarahi's work can be clearly seen in the positive changes at the school, despite it being harder to explain or quantify.
- Shifting self-belief, turning around negative internal and external prejudices, is a powerful way to break intergenerational patterns.

This approach has made a big positive difference within both school and broader whanau community over the two years (2013- 2015) period. As 2016 gets underway, the school remains totally committed to furthering this initiative. They are in a process of transition to new leadership and approach for the next phase.



For more information about Child Rich Communities visit everychildcounts.org.nz/resources%2BIndex/Community+led+development

If you would like to know more please contact: office@raurimu.school.nz
www.ccc.net.nz/raurimu-avenue-school.html