

Affirmation as individuals

Zachary dancing

Children: Zachary and Erin
8 February
Teacher: Carol

Sitting on the chair with Zach, going to Africa "to do ballet", Erin is wearing a tutu. When in "Africa" she changes her dress and gives one to Zach so he can do ballet too. They dance to music on the radio for a little while and then move off to separate activities.



Parent's voice

It was great to see how Zach joined in with Erin's game. He really does enjoy moving to music and it is nice to see him feeling comfortable enough to express himself in this way in such a supportive environment. It is reassuring to know that you are seeing the same things in Zach at crèche as we are at home.

He loves to move to music, any kind of music, and will often adapt his movement to the rhythm and feel of the music. The other day when he and I were home together I put Vanessa Mae's classical album on to listen to. Suddenly he stopped what he was doing and for about 20 minutes he just danced, almost lost in the music. When it went slow, he went slow. When it was loud he did swooping big movements. It was so wonderful to watch. He really is learning to be a wonderful dancer as he explores all these movements and ways of dancing.

What's happening here?

Zachary and Erin are dancing, and the teacher and a parent each add a commentary to the photograph of the two children.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Contribution/Mana Tangata lens)?

Zachary's parent adds the short-term review to this short description of an event at the childcare centre. Zachary's mother comments that in her view Zachary is learning to be a dancer, and she describes an episode at home that supports this view. She affirms him as an individual with a particular strength and recognises the value of Zachary's feeling comfortable dancing with other children at the centre as well as dancing at home.

How might this documented assessment support Contribution/Mana Tangata?

This is a documented account of how Zachary's individuality as a dancer has been noticed, recognised, and respected, and recorded for revisiting.

Erin's role has been important too. By siting dancing in a "going to Africa to do ballet" story, she has described ballet as a cultural event. It may be that previous experiences at the centre have introduced this idea. Reflection by staff on this documentation might lead to further exploration of this aspect of Erin's play.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Dance is an aspect of the Communication/Mana Reo and of the Well-being/Mana Atua strands. Perhaps Erin is developing a working theory about what goes on in Africa. This would link with the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand.