

# Planning guide for transitions in a hybrid world

Grow Waitaha

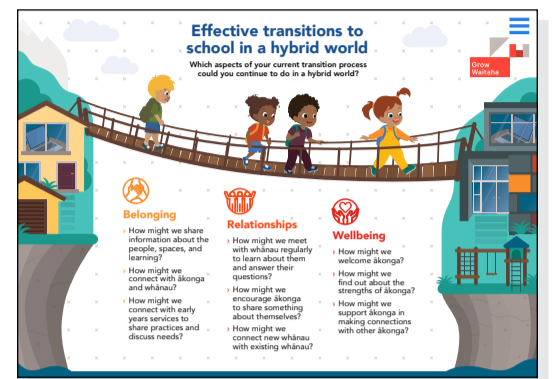
## How might we as leaders and kaiako strengthen transitions to school in a hybrid world?

As practitioners we need to be increasingly responsive to and proactive about the changing environment. Our traditional view of transitioning to school might not be fit for purpose.

This resource is designed for your team to have a conversation which may prompt reflection about your transition to school process.

This is not a "to do" list, but we hope these suggestions might:

- resonate with you
- help you solve a problem
- inspire you to try something different.



## Build a sense of belonging

When onsite visits or face to face hui are not an option, it is important that we find different ways to support ākonga and whānau feel connected to and familiar with the school environment.



## Form responsive relationships

Working in partnership with ākonga and whānau is all about building connections between home and school. This might not be something that happens face to face or within the school grounds. Therefore we must explore different ways to build connections.



## Focus on wellbeing and growth mindset

Lockdowns, environmental events, and other uncontrollable changes have an impact on anxiety levels and resilience. It's useful to promote wellbeing and growth mindset strategies. Acknowledging prior experiences of ākonga assists them to feel confident, safe, and secure – these are key to wellbeing and a smooth transition.

### Reflective questions

- › How might we share information about the people, spaces, and learning?
- › How might we connect with ākonga and whānau?
- › How might we connect with early years services to share practices and discuss needs?

### Actions

#### Whole school ideas:

- Create a video message from the principal, kaiako and other key staff
- Host a live, virtual tour of the school – choose ākonga to be tour guides

#### Learning space specific ideas:

- Use online video calls to bring ākonga face-to-face with the learning environment
- Host virtual hui with small groups of ākonga and whānau so that they can meet and make new friends

#### For each child:

- Hold individual online meetings to build relationships
- Give them a call
- Send them a letter
- Send a 'welcome to school' package home such as a first day social story, staff photos, a simple activity to complete, and an information booklet

### Reflective questions

- › How might we meet with whānau regularly to learn about them and answer their questions?
- › How might we ask ākonga to share about themselves?
- › How might we connect new whānau with existing whānau?

### Actions

#### For each child:

- Host a virtual hui with them in their early years environment
- Ask them to draw or write about their expectations of school and share it with you
- Invite them to share a taonga

#### With whānau:

- Invite them to share their aspirations for their child via phone, email, virtual hui or survey
- Take time to listen and answer their questions

#### General ideas:

- Provide whānau with helpful tips to prepare and support them for transition
- Hold online meetings with small groups of ākonga and whānau so that they can meet and make new friends
- Create a dedicated welcome page on your school website for new ākonga and their whānau to easily find information
- Schedule a live online Q & A forum via Zoom, Google Meet, Microsoft Teams

### Reflective questions

- › How might we welcome ākonga?
- › How might we find out about the strengths of ākonga?
- › How might we support ākonga in making connections with others?

### Actions

#### Culture:

- Nurture and encourage inquiry learning and risk taking
- Focus on the learning process rather than the outcome
- Communicate expectations effectively
- Consider the impact of the language you use

#### Prior experiences:

- Invite questions
- Encourage ākonga and their whānau to share how they see themselves as ākonga and the strategies they use to support learning

#### Connections:

- Set up a buddy system even before ākonga start school. Buddies could connect virtually, by phone or through a welcome letter or package.