

Presenters:	Sarah Whiting, Sarah Te One, Tracey McAllister(from CORE Education) with the teacher-researchers from Addington, Rawhiti, Ilam, Haeata, Kaiapoi Borough and Kaiapoi North schools
Organisation:	CORE Education
Position:	Lead Researcher; Kia hoe te awa whiria o
Abstract title:	Keeping the ‘spark in a five-year-old’s eye’ alight. Teacher-researcher experiences from the Kia hoe tahi I te awa whiria o ako project
	<p>In 2019, CORE Education began a research project with a focus on supporting pathways for lifelong learning for all children once they start school. Starting school is a significant cultural milestone that can be both exciting and worrying for children and parents alike. Children’s early feelings about school, their peers and teachers rests on how this transition unfolds. Supporting children and whānau to navigate the new environment of school can make a big difference to children’s self-worth and identity as learners and helps develop positive attitudes to subsequent experiences. Previous practices focused on preparing children for school, and were designed to support children to adjust to the new environment. Recent research suggests schools need to change their practices to be ‘child ready’. That means starting school is now based on a mutually agreed shared understanding between early learning settings, schools, whānau about what will facilitate the transition, taking into account, the best interests of the child.</p> <p>We wondered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can we ensure the ‘spark in a five-year-old’s eye’ is kept alight (Education Review Office, 2015)? Why is the cultural dissonance between the expectations about learning in the early years and at school so powerful? What needs to change? How can we make those changes quickly (in response to children’s experiences) and sustainably? <p>This led us to three big research aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure all children continue their pathways to learning success To empower new entrant teachers to be agile, responsive, innovative and courageous practitioners To enable system changes within between and across learning network. <p>In this presentation we share our new entrant teacher-researchers’ emerging stories of impact from six schools across Christchurch and Kaiapoi. We focus on our motivations for our projects, how we designed them, how children and whānau are integral to our design; and, what we have learnt so far.</p>