

FINAL REPORT: NGĀ TAMA TOA Initiative at Sunset Primary School

Summary of Need	<p>The Ngā Tama Toa class was an initiative between the Sunset Primary School Board of Trustees and the Cognition Education Trust. It catered for 9 boys who had significant learning and behaviour needs. Their classroom was designed rich with digital resources, more opportunity for 1:1 support and an environment that placed less demands on their resiliency and stress levels. The programme was launched in 2018 and disbanded in 2019.</p>
Summary of Results	<p>The students in Ngā Tama Toa made very limited progress academically and socially. The Ngā Tama Toa class was disbanded and the students were moved to Auraki (English Medium) or Rūmaki (Māori Medium) classes. The students made more academic progress in regular classrooms but struggled to fit in and their conduct was a consistent issue, especially initially.</p> <p>Four Ngā Tama Toa students moved to intermediate, and one of the youngest was excluded by the Sunset Primary School Board of Trustees for consistent threatening and racist behaviour. The remaining children have been settled into regular classroom programmes very well.</p>
Conclusion	<p>The Ngā Tama Toa class failed to address the needs of these students and was disbanded. That these students struggled to readjust to the mainstream classroom after 14 months in Ngā Tama Toa is critical evidence that the class failed in its objectives.</p> <p>There are many reasons that the programme failed, particularly that the teacher had low expectations of student engagement, conduct and academic progress.</p> <p>The model was flawed and the only positive outcome of the students being in Ngā Tama Toa was for the students in the regular classrooms.</p> <p>Essentially Ngā Tama Toa took pressure off classroom teachers to manage these complex students, but this further undermined the mana of the tamariki.</p>
Self-Review	<p>After the programme was disbanded school funds were combined with what was remaining of the CET grant to provide in class support for the students. This has had far greater impact on the individual students.</p> <p>Additionally, staff undertaking PLD with Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L) has seen significant improvements in student behaviour across the whole school. The installation of play options (e.g., adventure playground and bike track) and an increase in the standards expressed for students across the school has had a far greater impact on high needs students.</p> <p>Also the school is now involved in 14 new extra-curricular and sporting opportunities.</p> <p>These changes contribute to school being a much safer, more enjoyable and rewarding place to be a student.</p>