

Meet Raumati Paraha, a Kaitakawaenga

Based in Auckland, Raumati, joined the Ministry of Education in 2021



Raumati's story

Iwi/Hapu – Dads side, Ngāti Hine, Te Rarawa – Mums side – Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Manuhiri, Ngāti Wai, Tuwharetoa, Ngāti Tahu, Ngāti Whaea, Raukawa.

Raumati Paraha, is a raukura from Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa and Hato Petera College. She was immersed in te Āo Māori growing up and is fluent in Te Reo Māori.

Raumati's career journey and approach to work is shaped by the values that her whanau holds; from her grandparents, tupuna, and families on both her mum and dad's sides. She uses and shares the whakatauki "*Ma te ahurei o te tamaiti arahia to tatou nei mahi.*" as a guide for her work and the work of her teams. Raumati was diagnosed with optic atrophy at the age of 8, which is a hereditary vision impairment where the optic nerve does not grow.

Her dad and older sister both have the same vision impairment, and her son has recently been diagnosed as well. Raumati's whānau supported her to access learning support and provided foundations for her to have the opportunities of both Te Āo Māori and Pākehā. For Raumati, being a kaitakawaenga is a journey of ako and aroha, and a role which adds value to the lives of the whanau she works with and her community.

Raumati's day-to-day

Raumati works to empower Māori and Pasifika children with learning and special needs. Most of the cases that Raumati works on come through a referral process. Collaborating with whanau is a big

part of the solution and plan, and she supports children and whānau to access and connect with the specialist services and supports they are surrounded by.

Reflecting cultural values in her work

Raumati grew up in a whānau who were immersed in Tē Āo Māori from Kōhanga Reo, Kura Kaupapa, Rumaki Reo. She sees the role as one that requires someone who can speak te reo Māori, but more importantly can whakawhanaunga, network, and is open to work with people from all cultures. She believes the role is also about modelling cultural practices and supporting staff to stretch their te reo Māori and cultural competencies. The tamaiti/child and whānau often require cultural supports through physical, mental, and emotional challenges. She shares mātauranga, and will tautoko with whānau so they are able to access all the opportunities for their tamariki or mokopuna. Raumati works collectively with her team to provide the tamaiti and whānau with aroha, manaakitanga, and whakawhanaungatanga.

Rewards and challenges of the role

Rewards of Raumati's role *"are continuous as each day [she is] faced with different challenges and great opportunities to learn, develop, ultimately he painga mo ngā Rangatira mo apopo"*. She finds that the cases they work with are often complex and not always just about education.

Future aspirations

One day Raumati hopes to be a Service Manager in the Ministry. She sees the Ministry of Education as a great pathway for career progression no matter what that looks like.

*E tipu e rea mō ngā rā o tō ao
Ko tō ringa ki ngā rākau a te Pākehā hei ora mō tō tinana
Ko tō ngākau ki ngā taonga a ō tīpuna Māori
Hei tikitiki mō tō māhuna
Ko tō wairua ki tō Atua, Nānā nei ngā mea katoa.*

Kaitakawaenga – Role Information

Role responsibility:

- support Māori tamariki and their whānau in meetings with educators, Ministry specialist staff and other agencies with special education needs
- develop and maintain effective working relationships with Māori tamariki and their whānau, educators, local iwi, Ministry specialist staff and other agencies
- provide advice and guidance to Ministry staff, educators, local iwi and community groups on programme development and system changes.

Qualifications and experience needed:

- a relevant diploma qualification (minimum 2 years' study) or higher
- to be proficient in te reo Māori
- at least 3 years' teaching te reo Māori or 3 years' working in the community in Māori development

Previous experience in the education sector, a special education service or health agency will be an advantage.

An Kaitakawaenga must have knowledge of or skills in:

- working effectively in Māori education settings
- translating specialist knowledge into practical information
- working effectively with children, young people and their whānau
- coaching and upskilling others
- community and family support services
- effective communication, research and planning skills.

Career development

Becoming a Kaitakawaenga with the Ministry of Education will give you the rewards and challenges of the job itself, as well as opportunities to develop your career.

You will:

- be supported and supervised by experienced professional colleagues
- be kept up to date with the latest evidence
- take part in ongoing training
- have opportunities to share and extend your knowledge and skills.

There might also be opportunities to take part in projects or working groups and in time, you might be considered for leadership roles.

Further Information

Learning support careers and professional development

For more information about the role of a special education adviser and working in learning support, visit our [learning support careers page](#)

Learning support scholarships and study awards

If you're interested in a career in learning support, you may be eligible for a scholarship or study award. Find out [more here](#)