

# Appendices

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# Appendix A: Participant information sheets

## INFORMATION SHEET FOR PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

### *Addressing the needs of transient students: A collaborative approach to enhance teaching and learning in an area school*

Thank you for showing an interest in this project. Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate we thank you. If you decide not to take part, there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

#### **What is the aim of the project?**

This project is being undertaken as part of the Ministry of Education and New Zealand Council for Educational Research's Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI). Dr. Jude MacArthur and Dr. Nancy Higgins from the Donald Beasley Institute, and the principal and deputy principal of your school were successful in securing funding for a research project in your school in 2006, focusing on improving the educational and social experiences of transient students. In 2005, there were seventeen transient students in the school, from year two through to year 13, five of whom are of Maori descent. Transience has been identified as an area of interest and concern to staff who have raised questions about how best to support these children's learning and social experiences at school. The study will involve the two researchers working with the principal and a small group of staff through an action-research project which focuses on improvements in teaching and learning.

#### **What type of participants are being sought?**

Participants in this project are transient students who agree to be in the study, their parents, and teachers.

#### **What will participants be asked to do?**

Should you agree to take part in this project, you will be asked to join and participate in a community of practice and action-research team comprising two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute, the principal and deputy principal and teachers who have transient students in their classes in 2006. Together members of the team will be looking at the experiences of transient students and developing approaches to teaching and learning that will enhance these students' learning and social experiences at school. The team will do this through action-research cycles aimed at developing new educational approaches, and then assess their effectiveness and make further changes. As a participating teacher on the project you will participate in related team meetings, and have opportunities to explore new teaching approaches as determined by the team (e.g., by observing in other schools, talking to experts,

observing colleagues on the team, reading and synthesizing written material and research on transient students).

The team will initially work together to develop a timetable for team meetings and teacher release that fits with the schools' and teachers' commitments and responsibilities. The project includes funding for a total of 40 days of teacher-release time, and some of your time commitment will be accommodated by this.

The two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute will interview participating students, their parents/caregivers and teachers (including you), at the start and end of the project. A member of the team (either Jude, Nancy or one of your teaching colleagues) may also spend some time in your classroom observing transient students. Observations will be focused on transient students' learning and social experiences in the classroom. Observers will be talking to transient students from time-to-time about their learning and participation at school, and will ask them for their opinions about those things. They will also record students' interactions with teachers, peers and others.

Jude and/or Nancy will be at school about one day a fortnight, meeting with teachers on the project and observing in classrooms and in the school grounds. They both have experience in teaching and they will try to ensure that their presence is supportive and helpful within the classroom and wider school environment.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

**Can participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

**What data or information will be collected and what use will be made of it?** The study will involve the two researchers working with the principal and a small group of staff through an action-research project which focuses on improvements in teaching and learning for transient students in your school. Data will be collected for two purposes:

As an action-research team we will be collecting data on teaching approaches and student learning and achievement to help us make adjustments to teaching approaches that will enhance the educational experiences of transient students. Jude and Nancy will also be collecting data to evaluate the overall effectiveness of a community of learners and action-research approach in your school.

Data collected in the project will include the following:

- interviews with transient students, their parents/caregivers and teachers (These will only be undertaken by the two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute. Also, participants have the right to review and change their interview transcript before it is analysed).
- observations, notes, and short conversations in the classroom and school grounds.
- analysis of school records and student work samples and records.

Observations will take place in the classrooms of participating transient students, and in the school grounds during break times, before and after school. The observer will be recording in note form activities and interactions with teachers, peers and others with a particular focus on the student's learning and social experiences. The observer may also record in notes any relevant discussions they have with transient students and teachers in the classroom. Prolonged discussions may be audio-taped. Interactions with other children will be described in general ways without identifying those children in any way. If a Donald Beasley Institute researcher wishes to interview peers or friends of transient students, she will first seek the consent of their parents and then the children, themselves.

Either Jude or Nancy will also record an interview with you at the start and end of the project. Questions will focus on your teaching approach with transient students, on student progress and on the approaches developed by and the effectiveness of the community of learners and action-research team. This means that the data we collect will include interview transcripts. We will be using an open-questioning approach in our interviews with children and adults in this project. This means that it is not possible to say exactly what questions will be asked in the interview beforehand. Some questions will come up as we talk. Consequently, although the Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas we will cover in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the precise questions to be used. In the event that the line of questioning does develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you will have the right to decline to answer any particular question(s) and withdraw from the project at any stage without any disadvantage of any kind. Interviews will be transcribed by one of two administrative staff at the Donald Beasley Institute. Both staff are very experienced at this type of work and are bound by confidentiality. Your transcript will be returned for you to check before the data are used in any publications.

The results from this project will be used in conference presentations and will be written into publications for teachers and researchers to learn. Any data included in these publications will in no way be linked to any specific participant or to your school. All of the observations and any interviews undertaken for this project will be confidential to the researchers and teachers on the research team. We will send you a summary of the study's results, and you are most welcome to request a full copy of the results of the project from us should you wish. The data from the study, which is not part of the usual student information used by teachers (i.e. observation notes and interview transcripts), will be securely stored so that only the two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately, except that, as required by the University's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be kept in secure storage for five years, after which time it will be destroyed.

**What if participants have any questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Dr. Jude MacArthur or Dr. Nancy Higgins  
Senior Researchers  
Donald Beasley Institute  
Phone: 03-479-8080  
Email: [jude.macarthur@stonebow.otago.ac.nz](mailto:jude.macarthur@stonebow.otago.ac.nz)  
[nancy.higgins@stonebow.otago.ac.nz](mailto:nancy.higgins@stonebow.otago.ac.nz)

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human  
Ethics Committee

## INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS

### *Addressing the needs of transient students: A collaborative approach to enhance teaching and learning in an Area School.*

We are doing a research project a research project at your child's school looking at how schools can best support the learning of children who make frequent moves between schools. You have indicated an interest in your child being involved in this project. This information sheet tells you about the project. Please read this sheet carefully before you and your child make a decision about participating. If you decide to participate, we thank you. If you decide not to take part, there will be no disadvantage to you of any kind and we thank you for considering our request.

#### **What is the aim of the project?**

This project is being undertaken as part of the Ministry of Education and New Zealand Council for Educational Research's Teaching and Learning Research Initiative (TLRI). Dr. Jude MacArthur and Dr. Nancy Higgins from the Donald Beasley Institute, and the principal and deputy principal of your child's school have received funding for a research project in your school in 2006. The study will involve two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute in Dunedin working with the principal and a small group of teachers.

The project aims to help teachers make successful changes to their teaching to improve the learning and social experiences of children who change schools often.

#### **What type of participants are being sought?**

We are looking for children, who change schools often, and their parents/ caregivers. Other people taking part in the study include the principal and deputy principal of your child's school, and a small group of teachers.

#### **What will participants be asked to do?**

If you and your child agree to participate, you will both be asked to sign a consent form that shows you understand the study and wish to participate. Either Jude MacArthur or Nancy Higgins will also come to your home at the beginning and end of 2006 to talk to you and your child. In the interview we will be asking you and your child about his/her school experiences, and about your views on these. A member of the research team (either Jude, Nancy or one of the teachers) will also spend some time in your child's classroom observing and recording in notebooks their interactions with teachers, peers and others. We will also be talking to your child about things that are happening at school and asking them for their opinions about those things.

The principal, deputy principal and teachers in the study will join together with the two researchers into a team to look closely at the learning and social experiences of children in our study. The team will be looking at information from interviews, observations and from children's school work to develop approaches to teaching and learning that will help these students' in their learning and social experiences at school. Teachers will have special team meetings to do this, and they will also have opportunities to explore new teaching approaches as determined by the team (e.g., by observing in other schools, talking to experts, observing colleagues on the team,

reading and synthesizing written material and research on transient students). To support teachers to do this, the project includes funding for teacher-release time. Information from interviews with you will be used to help teachers develop effective teaching approaches. However this information will be used in a general way and will not be linked with any specific parent. If it is considered that the identity of a child or parent is important to make a good teaching decision, we will first of all ask for your consent to use any material from your interview in this way.

Jude and/or Nancy will be at school about one day a fortnight, meeting with teachers on the project and observing in classrooms and in the school grounds. They are both experienced teachers and they will try to ensure that their presence is supportive and helpful within the classroom and wider school environment.

Please be aware that you may decide not to take part in the project without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

**Can participants change their mind and withdraw from the project?**

You may withdraw from participation in the project at any time and without any disadvantage to yourself of any kind.

**What data or information will be collected and what use will be made of it?**

Information will be collected for two purposes:

5. The research team will collect data on teaching approaches and student learning and achievement to help us make adjustments to teaching approaches that will support children's learning.

Jude and Nancy will also be collecting data to find out how effective the research has been in improving children's learning and social experiences in your school.

Data collected in the project will include the following:

- interviews with students, their parents/caregivers and teachers (These will only be undertaken by the two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute and participants have the right to review and change their transcripts before it is analysed)
- written and/or audio-taped notes taken during observations and discussions in the classroom and school grounds
- analysis of school records and children's work samples and records.

The data we collect also includes interview transcripts from two interviews with you and your child. We will be using an open-questioning approach in our interviews with children and adults in this project. This means that it is not possible to say exactly what questions will be asked in the interview beforehand. Some questions will come up as we talk. Consequently, although the University Ethics Committee is aware of the general areas we will cover in the interview, the Committee has not been able to review the exact questions to be used. If any questions make you or your child feel hesitant or uncomfortable you will have the right to not answer those questions and to withdraw from the project without any disadvantage of any kind. Interviews will be transcribed by one of two administrative staff at the Donald



Beasley Institute. Both staff are very experienced at this type of work and are bound by confidentiality. Your transcript will be returned for you to check before anything you have said is used in any publications.

The results from this project will be used in conference presentations and will be written into publications for teachers and researchers to learn from. Any data included in these publications will in no way be linked to any specific participant or to your school. All of the observations and any interviews undertaken for this project will be confidential to the researchers and teachers on the research team. We will send you a summary of the study's results, and you are most welcome to request a full copy of the results of the project from us should you wish. The data from the study, which is not part of the usual student information used by teachers (i.e. observation notes and interview transcripts), will be securely stored so that only the two researchers from the Donald Beasley Institute will be able to gain access to it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately, except that, as required by the University's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be kept in secure storage for five years, after which time it will be destroyed.

**What if participants have any questions?**

If you have any questions about our project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact either:

Dr. Jude MacArthur or Dr. Nancy Higgins  
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Phone: 03-479-8080  
Emails: [jude.macarthur@stonebow.otago.ac.nz](mailto:jude.macarthur@stonebow.otago.ac.nz)  
[nancy.higgins@stonebow.otago.ac.nz](mailto:nancy.higgins@stonebow.otago.ac.nz)

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee

## INFORMATION SHEET FOR CHILDREN

**(This example is written for young primary children, and was modified to reflect the language used by older children and young people in the study)**

### *The “What school is like for me” project*

**Dear .....**

We would like you to read this information sheet to help you decide whether you would like to take part in a study we are doing.

#### **What it's about**

We are really interested in finding out about what helps kids to learn well at school. We will be spending some time at your school this year doing a study about what children do at school, and what school is like for them. We have a special interest in what school is like for children who go to lots of different schools, and we are working with your teachers to help children who go to lots of schools to learn well, and to have friends at school.

#### **Who I want to talk to**

If you agree to be in our study, you will be one of the “focus children”. That means we will be spending some time with you and your classmates and friends looking at what happens for you at school. We will also be working with your teachers so that you can learn well, and enjoy taking part in all the things that happen at school. We would like to know what you think about the things that happen at school, what you like and don't like and how those things make you feel. We are interested in your opinion so we will be talking to you at school from time to time. I will also talk to your teachers, and sometimes I will talk to other kids who are in the same class as you and to your friends.

#### **What you would have to do**

You and your Mum or Dad (or a caregiver) will sign a special form, called a Consent Form, which tells me you understand about the study and you want to be in it. Then we will start coming to school to see what you do at school. One of us will be at school about one day every two or three weeks. We will write down the things we see and some of the things you and other children say in a special notebook. We will also talk to you about school. We might talk to you a little bit when we are at school, like we might ask you to tell us about things you or some of the others are doing. But we would really like it if one of us could come and talk with you at home, if that's OK. We will probably talk to you at home at the start and the end of the year. If you want Mum or Dad to be there when we talk, that's fine. You can choose.

#### **You can change your mind**

Even if you sign the form, you can change your mind later if you don't want to be in the study any more and if you don't want to talk to us sometimes (you might have other things you want to do), or if you just want us to go away. That's all OK.

If you have any worries after our talks you can come and talk to one of us. We will keep everything private but if we're not sure about something you've told us, we might want to talk to your Mum or Dad or someone at school but we will check that's OK with you first.

**How I will do the study**

When we talk to you at home we might record your voice so that we can remember what you have said. But at anytime you can tell us to turn the recorder off and we will. The tape and the copy of your words from the tape will only be seen by us, but we might want to use some of your ideas to help your teachers teach you really well. If we think it is important for your teachers to know about some of the things that you said, we will check with you first to make sure that it's OK for us to do that.

When we have written the report about our work at school the tape will be wiped clean. The copy of the words will be kept locked up at our office in Dunedin for five years and then it will be shredded. We will be writing some books for teachers about the project we are doing. We might write about some of the things you have talked about but we won't use your name, or the name of the school so people won't know they are your words.

**If you want to know more about the study**

If you, or Mum or Dad (or your caregivers), want to know more about the study you can ask us . Our names are written here with our phone number.

**Jude MacArthur and Nancy Higgins - Phone (03) 479-8080**

Thank you for reading this Information Sheet.

## Appendix B: Interview guide for students

### *Demographics*

Age, gender, how many schools attended

### *Teaching and learning*

How would you describe your time at school so far?

What school did you like the best at school and why?

What do you hate about school and why?

Do you think that your teachers could teach you better? What suggestions would you have for them to be better teachers?

What can teachers do to help you learn more or better?

What do teachers do that makes it hard for you to learn?

How do you think you do at school (same as peers or different?)?

### **Secondary students-**

What's your favourite subject, and why?

### *Friendships*

Who are your friends at school?

What do you like doing with them?

What do you do at break times? With whom?

What do you like to do after school? With whom?

What does your teacher do to help you get new friends? What would you like them to do?.

## Appendix C: Interview guide for parents

Demographics: Occupation, siblings, ages,  
How many people live together? Own their own home? Rent? Beneficiary/Employed?

How often have you moved? Any particular reason?

Will you be moving in the future?

What do you think your child's educational experience is like?

Are there any improvements that can be made by teachers or the school?

Does your child like school?

Does your child have close friends at school?

## Appendix D: Interview guide for principal and teachers

Demographics: qualifications, gender, age, length of service, subject speciality, responsibilities in school, previous professional development undertaken,

Please describe your teaching experience?

What are your career plans for the future?

What do you think a transient child's educational experience is like?

Are there any improvements that can be made by teachers or the school?

How would you describe your teaching practice in regards to transient students?

What type of professional development would you need to improve your teaching practice in regards to transient children?

How do you learn best?

## Appendix E: Teaching strategies for transient children—ideas from the research

### **Home-school/ family involvement**

- Establish family, community and educational support networks
- Establish the school as a place that helps families e.g., have a practical resource available for families on where to get housing, clothing, community resources and groups, health services recreation, etc.
- Encourage parental involvement and participation in all aspects of education (including those aspects associated with high academic achievement) (Note—education is highly valued by many migrant families who see it as a ticket to the future- offering their children opportunities they did not have)
- Corporate culture that supports families and encourages strong school-family-rural community partnerships. Characterised by:
  - high expectations for school success
  - a welcoming school community
  - counsellor trained to understand and advocate for children’s needs
  - expectation that parents will participate in child’s education through parent meeting attendance and volunteer work
- Be aware of the responsibilities children have in their families to fulfil traditional adult roles (babysitting, translating, farm work, transporting a parent) and value these as necessities and as just as important as school
- Transient children can have poor health and poor access to medical resources –they may miss school because of this or come to school too sick or too tired to learn.

### **Community involvement**

- Much to be done in the community in terms of attitudes, education, and practices (outside school)
- Parent tutoring programmes for reading (need pool of trained parents)

### **Strategies for smooth transitions**

- Have a personalised pack of extra resources (books, stationary, etc.) ready for new arrivals
- Allow children to maintain contacts with their previous school, friends home, and encourage them to return contacts
- Develop school induction programmes that take children through special aspects of the school, and make child feel at home. Buddies, mentor, best friend (trained to assist)

## **Teaching and Learning**

- Very labour intensive—can require high staffing levels
- Assign a buddy/partner as a learning helper chosen for academic, personality, and behavioural reasons
- Collaboration with other children—co-operative learning, peer tutoring
- maximise personalised attention from the teacher—increased opportunities to work 1:1
- Pull-out style enrichment programmes focused on students’ strengths and interests
- Assess children’s access to the learning, social, sporting and cultural life of the school
- Consult with children, give them choices, listen to their perspectives and use these in planning
- Use anti-discrimination and affirmative action policies
- Clear behaviour plans—expectations and consequences for class and playground
- Murray neighbour’s research (in NZ, Australia, UK and USA) suggests:
  - Clear behaviour plans—expectations and consequences for class and playground
  - Tap into other resources—Health promoting Schools, Literacy co-ordinators, Alan Duff Books in Homes programme, etc.
  - Parent tutoring programmes for reading (need pool of trained parents)
  - Tap into other resources—Health promoting Schools, Literacy co-ordinators, Alan Duff Books in Homes programme, etc.

## **Social and belonging**

- Assess the physical arrangement of the room and the climate of the classroom
- Be open to children’s cultural, sporting and social interests—build opportunities into the school day to recognise and foster these
- Providing 1:1 in class is more effective than withdrawing children from class—helps integrate them socially and they are not singled out.

## **Teachers, co-ordinators and support staff**

- Holistic planned approach by a team of people to meet child’s needs—learning, physical, emotional, safety, social
- Involve school counsellors especially with adolescents
- Provide additional support from others in the school - teachers, professional colleagues, classmates, teacher aides
- Murray Neighbour’s NZ work suggests:
  - Aim for a holistic planned approach by a team of people to meet child’s needs—learning, physical, emotional, safety, social
  - Onsite training of staff and using strengths of own staff is preferred
  - Most successful solutions come when schools can target and dedicate funding and a lead teacher for transient children. Lead teacher is released from the classroom for assessments, organising class placement, programme input for the child, work with class teacher to develop/find resources and plan teaching, IEPs.



**Administrative**

- Extra admin staff hours to deal with extra workload
- Employ an attendance officer (could be for cluster of schools) who liaises with special needs teacher
- Social workers can be effective co-ordinators of services