

Evidence learning, outcomes & future evaluation priorities

Te Ako Manaaki | Integrated Response Framework

PURPOSE

This brief brings together early outcome evidence, recurring implementation learning and a proposed agenda for the next phase of evaluation. It is intended as a concise companion to the research reports and the wider Evidence & Impact framework.

What the evidence suggests so far

- Integrated responses can improve outcomes for young people while also changing how schools, agencies and community organisations work together.
- The mechanism is not a single programme: it is a way of working built around trusted relationships, coordination, continuity, clear responsibility and the ability to act across organisational boundaries.
- Future evaluation now needs to test these mechanisms more deliberately, across different sectors and communities, and connect implementation quality with longer-term outcomes, system change and value for investment.

What changed in the early Managed Moves application

The 2017-2020 West Auckland Managed Moves work provides an early proof-of-concept for the approach that later developed into Te Ako Manaaki. The available evidence includes both outcomes for young people and changes in the surrounding service system.

418 young people in or supported through Managed Moves	95 avoided exclusion from school	46 returned to education after exclusion
166 mainstream / other education or training	252 Alternative Education placements / pathways	60%+ additional supports accessed by participants

SYSTEM OUTCOMES

The effect extended beyond individual cases

- Some mainstream schools changed the way they worked with young people at risk of exclusion.
- School capability to keep priority learners engaged in mainstream education strengthened.
- The quality of referrals to agencies and services improved.
- Connections between schools and services strengthened beyond individual Managed Moves cases.
- Partners identified combinations of services that were more effective together than in isolation.
- The work enabled more innovative 'boundary bending' across organisational silos to find workable solutions.

Key interpretation

The early evidence suggests that Te Ako Manaaki should be evaluated as both an outcomes framework and a system-change intervention. Its value is not captured by participant outcomes alone.

What we are learning about how change happens

Across the early research and subsequent applications, several consistent patterns have emerged. These are best treated as testable mechanisms: conditions that should be measured because they may explain why outcomes improve in some settings and not others.

01

Relationships are infrastructure

Trust is not an optional relational extra. It enables participation, information exchange, problem-solving and the willingness of partners to act together.

02

Foundational conditions matter

Progress is difficult to sustain when safety, health, housing, food, identity, belonging or other foundational needs remain unresolved.

03

Coordination must lead to action

Meetings and shared plans only create value when decisions, responsibilities, timeframes and follow-through are explicit.

04

Continuity protects progress

A consistent relationship and pathway holder reduces the risk that gains are lost when people move between schools, programmes, services or funding arrangements.

05

Local knowledge improves design

Communities and frontline practitioners often see system gaps, strengths and workable solutions before these are visible in formal data.

06

Learning must travel upward

Operational learning has greater value when recurring barriers can influence governance, commissioning, investment, policy and system design.

Future evaluation priorities

The next phase should move beyond demonstrating that an integrated response can work. The priority is to understand which elements matter most, for whom, in which contexts, and what is required for the approach to scale without losing its core principles.

1

Outcomes across the nine domains

Track change across the integrated response domains rather than relying on a single presenting issue. Examine which foundational domains shift first, which changes are associated with later engagement and wellbeing, and where unresolved needs constrain progress.

2

Participant and whānau experience

Measure trust, dignity, access, cultural safety, participation, continuity and whether support feels coherent from the perspective of people and whānau.

3

Implementation quality and mechanism

Test the contribution of facilitation, navigation roles, shared planning, role clarity, follow-through, governance support and reflective learning. Distinguish core principles from adaptations that can vary by context.

4

Cross-sector system functioning

Measure network strength, referral quality, information flow, duplication, delays, escalation pathways, partner participation and whether recurring barriers are actually resolved.

5

Equity, culture and Indigenous partnership

Build cultural responsiveness and Indigenous partnership into the evaluation design itself, including governance, interpretation and the definition of success - not as a retrospective subgroup analysis.

Future evaluation priorities - continued

6

Longitudinal outcomes

Where appropriate, connect short-term changes with longer-term education, employment, safety, wellbeing and service-use outcomes through administrative and linked data.

7

Economic and public value

Assess cost, avoided cost, changes in service utilisation and value for investment. Include the value created when existing resources are used more coherently, not only the cost of a new intervention.

8

Transferability and scaling

Compare applications across education, attendance, youth, disability, whānau wellbeing and other settings to identify what is universal, what is context-specific, and what infrastructure is needed for sustainable adoption.

9

Policy and commissioning feedback

Track whether learning from delivery changes organisational decisions, funding settings, commissioning, policy or system design. This tests whether learning genuinely travels upward.

A practical architecture for the next phase

Evaluation should remain proportionate to the maturity and purpose of each application. Not every site needs every method from day one; the architecture should build evidence progressively while retaining a common core that supports comparison and learning.

Time horizon	Primary question	Examples of evidence
Immediate	Are people engaging and is the response working as intended?	Experience, access, trust, participation, action completion, nine-domain baseline.
Near term	Is practice becoming more coherent?	Role clarity, coordination, pathway quality, duplication, partner relationships, implementation fidelity.
Medium term	Are outcomes becoming more stable?	Engagement, attendance, wellbeing, safety, participation, transitions, sustained support.
Long term	Is the wider system changing?	Service use, avoided costs, longitudinal outcomes, network/system shifts, policy and commissioning change.

RECOMMENDED DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- Use a mixed-method design: quantitative outcomes plus qualitative experience and implementation evidence.
- Collect a small common core of measures across all applications, with context-specific measures added locally.
- Build feedback loops so findings can improve delivery during implementation rather than waiting until the end.
- Treat system-level outcomes as legitimate outcomes, not simply background context.
- Where attribution is limited, be explicit about contribution and test plausible mechanisms rather than over-claiming causality.

The next evidence question

Not simply: does Te Ako Manaaki work? But: what changes, for whom, through which mechanisms, under what conditions - and what does the wider system need to do differently as a result?

SOURCE NOTES

This brief synthesises: Te Ako Manaaki, Evidence & Impact (teakomanaaki.com/evidence-impact/); Short Report on Managed Moves: A Summary from the Te Ako Manaaki Report, 31 March 2021; and the current Te Ako Manaaki evaluation framework. The future evaluation priorities are proposed priorities for the next phase rather than findings already established by the early research.