**Developing a ‘How to Guide’ or Operations Manual**

1. **Benefits and research**
2. **Purpose and outcomes**

Once we feel confident in knowing what the benefits are getting clear on the purpose with your team is the next step. Knowing the reasons why you are doing what you are wanting to do gives you some clear direction. Every programme will look slightly different. And it will / could change as your tamariki change too! We need to be in tune with our children not just nature.

Below are a few examples of what a purpose might look like:

* To provide children with the opportunity to engage in nature play and learning in the early years
* Provide the opportunity for parents to engage in nature play and learning with their young children in a supported environment
* Provide the opportunity for parents/carers and young children to increase their social engagement
* Provide the opportunity for increased understanding of the natural environment
* Provide the opportunity for increase physical exercise through unstructured play in the natural environment.
* To develop a deeper connection with their local environment and become kaitiakitanga.
* To build confident and capable communicators with strong social skills
* To help develop capable and confident citizens who feel enabled to make positive changes for the environment

1. **Philosophies and practices** e.g. child led, seasonal focus, not just a project or topic – it is integrated, classroom design, outdoor spaces, methodologies, public persona.

A theory or attitude that acts as a guiding principal for behaviour

If we think about the purpose/outcomes that we want to achieve we need to examine our philosophy, our thinking and see if they match e.g. if we think that climbing trees is not ok, that taking shoes off outside is not ok, that getting dirty is not ok – then we might struggle to achieve what we want to achieve. We need to examine our teams thoughts on risk, dirt, level of involvement, observation v hands on, what our role is, what their role is, child led or adult led or a combination.

* Having knowledge or awareness of the natural environment and considering it in our day to day practices
* Clear thinking about our relationship and impact on the environment
* Connecting with the natural world through experiences and relationships
* Inspiring change and action
* Our impact on the environment

What we do back at school or our centre needs to reflect what we want to achieve out in nature. Sustainable practices, environmentally friendly, how we bring nature into the classroom or centre, how we feel, what we do, how we are with other people.

1. **Standard operating procedures** **(SOP)** – safety, constraints, ratios, equipment, location, info, scope of activities
2. **Roles and responsibilities** - Lead teacher, support teacher, parents, and children

* Lead teacher, teacher, parents, children
* Who does what in the planning stages
* Who does what the day before
* Who does what the morning of
* Who leads the session, who supports and how do they do that
* Do you have a storage box?
* Think of every stage and what roles people will have – pre, during, after.

1. **Checklists / group gear / equipment list**

* Pre-departure check
* Equipment check
* Site check
* List of everyone who is out on the session that day must stay at centre or school and be easily accessible – school office? Centre office?
* Who provides children’s equipment – low decile / provide it so everyone can participate (fundraising, grants)
* How do you manage and fund group equipment and what do you need?
* How do you store it and look after it?

1. **Policies and procedures** – gather existing and do you need any new procedures?

Policies from your centre or school can be copied and added into the guide – relevant ones (excursions, emergency response/communication policy, water). Are there any procedures that need to be created to help ensure the policies are implemented?

1. **Risk management and hazard documentation**
2. **Emergency / crisis planning / Communication plan (policy)**

Most organisations should have an emergency or crisis plan. What you need to check is if it works off site or if it needs to be amended for offsite.

1. **Travel logistics** (excursion policy)

* Think through the logistics of going on an excursion
* If walking you might want to develop some guidelines and roles for the walk

1. **Whanau engagement** and information evening details

* This is to help share the benefits of a nature programme and to get buy in and support
* Share what it will look like, what they might be doing and how it links to the curriculum
* Talk through safety stuff (risk benefits, learning injuries v life altering, how risks are managed and the children’s involvement in risk assessment. You can link benefits here too)
* What is required of parents who come along – parent help / What their role is
* What they can do in their own time to support the programme
* Talk through what gear and equipment is needed and how that will be funded or fundraised for
* Answer any questions or address any concerns.

1. **Permission forms and parent help roster**

* How will you set this up?
* Do they fill in a form each time v each term v each year?
* Refer to EOTC for the requirements for schools page 32: <file:///C:/Users/seals/Downloads/EOTC%20Guidelines%20Update%20APR%202018_01%20(2).pdf>