

**Rationale**

*Sistema Waikato* believes that rich and diverse backgrounds, experience, and perspectives are fundamental to the development of a culturally responsive programme. Through building diversity amongst staff and ensuring inclusion and equality for all eligible children and families, we believe programme delivery will be enhanced.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is as follows:

1. To ensure that the *Sistema Waikato* programme recognises that the diversity within individual students and staff members is influenced by a variety of factors, including gender, cultural heritage, socio-economic background, ability/disability, and personality
2. To ensure the programme is responsive to this diversity
3. To ensure the programme acknowledges the Treaty of Waitangi and recognises the importance of the bicultural foundations of Aotearoa New Zealand
4. To ensure the cultural protocols of our students and staff members are recognised and respected at all times
5. To promote harmonious relationships between diverse groups

**Guidelines**

*Sistema Waikato* is committed to the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, reflecting these principles through:

- Partnership – recognise and value cultural diversity of enrolled families
- Protection – respect every person’s cultural heritage
- Participation – encourage and support full participation and equal opportunities for all staff, children, and families

*Sistema Waikato* recognises and appreciates the variety of characteristics that make a person unique. *Sistema Waikato* will acknowledge and celebrate cultural diversity within the programme through:

1. Asking families to share their cultural values as part of the enrolment process
2. Ensuring all staff, including volunteers, are aware of children’s different cultural identities
3. Pronouncing staff, children’s and families’ names correctly and asking for help if necessary
4. Incorporating Māori cultural contexts and te reo into teaching and learning programmes

5. Incorporating, where appropriate, the children's cultural contexts into the teaching and learning programme
6. Providing opportunities for children to share their culture in meaningful ways
7. Ensuring children experience learning contexts from multiple cultures
8. Providing opportunities for staff of different cultural origins to share their knowledge and expertise in a meaningful context
9. Providing opportunities for parents of different cultural origins to share their valued knowledge and expertise
10. Celebrating and participating in events that are important to the cultural communities of the Partner Schools
11. Continually striving to improve our knowledge of children's languages, cultures, and identities