



MindPlus

YourSchool



Neurodiversity
in Education
Project

www.neurodiversity.org.nz
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Summary

MindPlus YourSchool brings specialist gifted education capability to your school.

The Neurodiversity in Education Project will support you to offer your own world-class half-day a week programme for the Y2 - 10 gifted learners at your school or across your Kāhui Ako, wherever you are in New Zealand.

At the same time, we train your teacher as a specialist MindPlus educator. After two years, you will be equipped to run your own YourSchool programme using our platform, as part of our wider MindPlus community.

The challenge for schools

5% of children are gifted, which means they are born with innate high abilities in one or more domains - intellectual, creative, cultural, social, spiritual or physical. 30% of gifted children also have other neurodiversities such as ASD, ADHD and dyslexia.

What that means is that, in each of your classrooms, at least one of your students is gifted, and they may well have another neurodiversity which can make spotting them as gifted even more challenging!

Whilst some gifted kids may cope in a normal classroom without specialist support, many won't.

Without the special challenge and support they need, half of these gifted and otherwise neurodivergent students will underachieve. They may struggle or even drop out. They might become disruptive in class. They could feel isolated or develop anxiety and depression.

As a school, you know you have a responsibility to provide these children with specialist support. But you may well be at a loss for how to provide that support effectively - few schools have a trained gifted education teacher on staff.

“ We've been looking hard for better ways to support our gifted kids - we just don't know what these are right now. ”

MindPlus Partner Teacher, Manawatū



“ We know there’s a very real need in our school, but right now, we don’t have the capacity to meet that need. We want to bring our teachers along on this journey. ”

Principal, Nelson primary school



The opportunity

MindPlus YourSchool offers a solution. You can deliver your own half-day a week, world class specialist gifted education programme, and train one of your teachers as a specialist gifted education teacher.

We’ve made it easy so that you can ensure your gifted and otherwise neurodivergent ākonga can achieve their potential to do extraordinary things.

What schools get

MindPlus YourSchool involves a Partner School working with us to deliver its own MindPlus programme to its own kids at its own school with its own teacher. We provide:

- The MindPlus **Curriculum** - the bedrock of the learning experience for gifted students. Our curriculum covers conceptual thinking, talent development, and social and emotional learning, and draws on our 25 year experience of gifted education provision.
- The MindPlus **Learning Platform** used by all our teachers and students as part of our hybrid learning programme.
- The MindPlus **Teacher Resources** that enable teachers to “plug and play” by taking proven ready to go learning tools and, where necessary, adjusting for their own context.
- The MindPlus YourSchool **Professional Learning Programme**, enabling your teacher to undertake a two year programme of bite-sized online learning alongside mentoring and coaching, leading to certification as a MindPlus Partner Teacher.
- A MindPlus **Treasure Box** containing all the books, games and other learning resources you need to power up gifted students in their learning (additional cost).
- **Clubs** - where curious Y2-10 students from across our New Zealand come together to share and learn online in our diverse range of Clubs from coding to maths, design, creative writing and beyond.

Once a school has its own certificated MindPlus Partner Teacher after two years, we are able to provide ongoing access to these MindPlus tools and platforms with a lesser level of professional support.

How it works

<p>1. Sign up</p>	<p>Get in touch with our Head of Programmes, Madelaine Armstrong Willcocks, to talk through your needs. We can start together at any point in the year. If you're keen, we enter into an agreement so we're all clear on how it works and our mutual responsibilities.</p>
<p>2. Pick your teacher</p>	<p>A successful MindPlus YourSchool experience will come down to the teacher you pick to lead the programme as the MindPlus Partner Teacher. Make sure they have a passion for meeting the needs of diverse learners, and that you can give them the time to run the programme and upskill professionally. You will need to release them for at least half a day each week. It's a great opportunity for someone you see as high potential to add to their professional toolkit.</p>
<p>3. Plan logistics</p>	<p>For MindPlus YourSchool, you'll need to have a quiet dedicated space - a classroom or part of the library perhaps - for the MindPlus kids to gather and work together with your teacher for half a day each week.</p> <p>The MindPlus learning platform is online and our MindPlus teacher will join in online for 45 minutes during each session. That means you'll need a Chromebook or laptop for each of your students and internet connectivity.</p> <p>In terms of timetabling, you may need to juggle to ensure that the MindPlus kids get their half day every week. Consistency matters so make sure to protect MindPlus time from other demands on your students.</p>
<p>4. Get up to speed</p>	<p>Your MindPlus Partner Teacher will begin their learning journey with a self-guided online Introduction to Gifted Education programme. It's fun, interactive and practical, covering four areas: (1) what is giftedness; (2) how to identify gifted students; (3) what makes quality gifted education; and (4) working with the MindPlus curriculum. Next is an Introduction to MindPlus module that walks our new Partner Teachers through the MindPlus Curriculum, our Learning Platform, Teacher Resources and Hero.</p>
<p>5. Identify students and communicate with families</p>	<p>We support you to identify the gifted students you'd like to be part of MindPlus at your school. We suggest a minimum of 10 kids and a maximum of 25. A multi-year group works well, recognising that kids can be working across many different age levels and your teacher can differentiate learning within the group. You may want to invite gifted learners from other schools in your Kahui Ako to join in.</p> <p>If you'd like to run a Whānau Information Evening, we are happy to join in online to help answer parent questions and support you.</p>
<p>6. Plan</p>	<p>Your Partner Teacher and our MindPlus coach will get together to plan the MindPlus programme at your school, building in aspects that are important to your school community.</p> <p>They will also plan for how they will work together through the year, including the weekly 45 minute online session led by our MindPlus coach; our MindPlus coach's weekly review of one piece of student work each; and weekly support and planning catch-ups with your teacher.</p>

<p>7. Get started</p>	<p>We're all set to go! Your gifted kids, your teacher and our MindPlus coach are ready to kick off a fantastic year of specialist gifted education that extends, challenges and inspires your kids. Your students will receive access to the MindPlus Learning Platform including Clubs.</p>
<p>8. Ongoing professional learning</p>	<p>Your teacher will continue to work through the rest of our online Professional Learning Programme, at a pace that works for them.</p> <p>In their first year, this will include modules on finding gifted learners, understanding some of their common characteristics and working to meet their particular needs.</p> <p>In their second year, they will come together with other MindPlus teachers for more focused work in areas they choose such as the needs of neurodivergent students or gifted girls.</p> <p>Our Head of Programmes leads this learning programme and is responsible for certification of Partner Teachers at the end of their two years with us.</p>
<p>9. Reflect and iterate</p>	<p>Each term, your teacher and our MindPlus coach will review how your class is going, agree any areas that need work, and identify opportunities for further learning and support.</p> <p>At the end of the year, students, their families and their regular classroom teachers will be part of our annual Impact Survey looking at how MindPlus has impacted on student learning and social and emotional outcomes.</p>

What does it cost?

We have Ministry of Education funding to offer the programme to a limited number of schools across NZ.

Schools need to make a contribution of \$1,500 pa (excl GST) to take part in the programme.

Once the two year programme has finished, schools can continue to use the MindPlus platform and resources with a lesser level of professional support. This will cost \$2,000 pa (excl GST).

Schools will need to pay for their own Partner Teacher for the half day per week. Some schools are able to fit this into existing staffing allocations. Others ask parents to contribute towards teacher and programme costs.

To learn more, please contact:

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