Case study 10: Rotorua Primary School – getting staff and the community on the journey together

Rotorua Primary School is a full primary school in central Rotorua, with a role that is 98% rangatahi Māori. The school has a strong digital focus and is an Apple-distinguished school. Every young person can access a digital device, either provided by the school or through BYOD. Teachers interchangeably use digital devices and more traditional methods in their classrooms, and while some teachers are more confident in this area, every teacher is on a learning journey continually developing their own knowledge and putting it into practice in their classroom.

The school has prioritised the PLD of all staff members, including support staff, to ensure that they know how to use the digital devices in their classrooms and can better integrate them into their lessons. The school highlights the importance of ongoing support, with PLD regularly occurring and an Apple specialist teacher who supports other staff members to utilise Apple technology in the classroom. Rotorua Primary School understands that just like their young people, teachers learn at their own pace, and highlighted the need for different levels of support for different teachers. Every staff member needs support to grow no matter their current comfort level or knowledge base.

The school has a strong cultural focus and connection with young people, whānau and the wider community. This school community has gone on the journey as the school has received Apple accreditation and integrated devices into the school. This has seen some parents go from sceptics to advocates for digital learning. The school is looking into what critical thinking for the online environment would look like, and see critical thinking as a guiding principle for the school as they move more into the media and information literacy and digital citizenship space. Rotorua Primary School acknowledges that more support is needed for other schools to pivot to a greater focus on digital, and there would need to be substantive support and resources to implement a media and information literacy and digital citizenship programme.