



A guide for schools

What teachers need to know

This is a guide for you to develop a student-led project to set up a Walking Pou initiative at your school. This can be part of [Te Waka Hīkoi \(Walking School Bus\)](#) initiative (with Pou as the meeting points along the way). Or this can be a stand-alone leadership project that encourages wellbeing or addresses climate change.

Supporting resources

- **Steps** for completing Pou Project: Timings, actions and links for contacts and more information.
- **Teaching Resource:** When, what and who, when setting up a Walking Pou.
- **Learning Resource:** Supporting students on a Walking Pou Project – Taking Action.

Download these resources on the [Pou Hīkoi](#) page.

NZ Curriculum Achievement Objectives

See the NZ Curriculum [Achievement Objectives](#) resource for Māehe Manawa Ora (Movin' March). These could be useful for your planning.



What is a Walking Pou?

A Pou Hikoi (Walking Pou) is based on a Māori concept of Pouwhenua (land post). Traditionally these are carved wooden posts that are a cultural marker or symbol. They mark a place of significance that connects people with place.

They can be painted or decorated in a way that foster cultural identity and engage the community. Pou can enrich our understanding of te āo Māori (Māori culture). They connect people with the environment. They strengthen a sense of belonging and identity through artwork and storytelling.



Pou can mark walking routes, to help tamariki (children) get to and from kura (school).

Why have a Walking Pou?

Walking Pou signal a safe place for whānau and friends to meet so they can walk or wheel to kura. Pou can strengthen a sense of belonging in a school's neighbourhood. Creating Pou involves the whole school community and once installed, it has longevity. They connect people and place, which benefit our tamariki and future generations.



Where's a good place for Pou?

Often Walking Pou are away from the school gate where whānau can park, then walk or wheel the rest of the way to school. These might be part of a Park and Stride initiative. This helps reduce 'chaos' and increases road safety around the school gate.

A Walking Pou might also be used as a starting point near the school for a Walking School Bus.

Pou can be installed near school entrances to greet whānau or provide a meeting point at the end of the day. The Pou might tell a story about the school's community.

Berhampore School installed 3 Pou at school entrances. The Pou symbolise the atua Tamanuiterā, Tāwhirimātea and Tane Mahuta. Nearby, a fourth Pou, Tangaroa, marks the start of their Walking School Bus. See the full story [here](#).

Creating a Walking Pou

- See [Steps](#) for more detail on tasks and timing for setting up a Pou.
- Involve mana whenua from the start. They can share knowledge and tikanga as it evolves. Your local [Enviroschools Facilitator](#) can help your school make this connection.
- Consider the location of your Walking Pou, and the installation costs. Talk to your [local council](#) about potential funding (or fundraising tips and available discounts).
- Contact [Greater Wellington](#) or your Enviroschools Facilitator. They may be able to provide advice or support when running a Walking Pou project at your school.
- Reach out to local or adjoining schools. It may be possible to combine work with them to share resources or costs.
- Depending on location, you may need to get permission from landowners to install the Pou, for eg, Ministry of Education or local council.
- Reflect your school community when decorating the Pou.
- Invite students to submit designs for the Pou and involve them in painting them.
- If possible, involve a local artist to help guide design and paint the Pou.



Further activities, resources, and links

- Use other Kura Kete resources which connect with this, such as:
 - [Te Waka Hīkoi \(Walking School Bus\)](#)
 - [Kia Tū, Kia Hīkoi \(Park and Stride\)](#)
 - [Te Taiao \(Environment\)](#) Movin' March learning resource
- The story of [Berhampore School's Walking Pou and Walking School Bus](#), as an Enviroschools leadership project.
- The [Berhampore School story](#) as a collaborative process (Education Gazette).
- Link to Creative communities: [Creative Communities Scheme](#) | [Creative New Zealand](#).
- Your local library account may give you free access to the Generosity Funding portal, [GivUs](#), to find suitable grants to apply for.

