

E taku hoa, nau mai rā!

At the beginning of term one, you were but a fledgling. Now, no longer the fledgling. Eleven weeks of getting to know yourself in your new role, in your new environment, and teacher of our own students. You've come a long way!

One term down and what a term it was! Those first few weeks of getting to know how the kura works, who your colleagues are and where their classrooms are situated, was something I remember strongly. Perhaps, now that you've made it through to term 2, you're thinking, "What have I got myself into?" or "Save me, I feel like I'm drowning!". That's normal. Be assured, you're not alone and every other PCT across Aotearoa is probably feeling the same way.

Ideally, at this stage of the year, you have set the tikanga and routines for you and your classroom, and students are aware of your expectations. It's important to set these early because these tikanga establish a culture that is key to a successful, engaged and well-managed classroom.

One way of doing this is to connect with your students and their whānau – whether that be through their whakapapa affiliations, meeting regularly with parents/caregivers (and not just about the bad stuff), or simply by asking students what their interests are. I can't emphasise strongly enough how crucial it is to connect. Relationships need to be worked at, carefully established, and built on reciprocal trust. By taking the time to do that, students feel more relaxed and included in the teaching and learning process because they have been involved in the design.

If you are struggling to establish a good rapport with your class, get proactive and seek support. Your mentor, or other staff members, will have some great ideas to share. Set a goal around this, do some reading about [building an inclusive classroom culture](#) and trial some new strategies.

Connection shouldn't just stop at your students and their whānau. One person you should really build a trusting relationship with, is your mentor. They have agreed to support you in getting through your initial years. However, they can't do that if you don't see this as a reciprocal relationship. That means giving as well as receiving.



Your mentor is just as busy as you, in some cases busier, so it's important that you are honest with them and let them know when you need them. The best way to do this is through regular meetings. Be proactive and set an agenda of items to discuss, especially if you have particular questions or concerns. This relationship is critical while you are working towards full certification.

Moving into term two don't forget to reflect, reflect, reflect. During these years as a PCT, make sure you set aside time to reflect on your practice so you can evaluate what worked well and what might need improving. E hoa, not everything goes to plan, so document what you do and be solution-focused. Don't give up!

A great teacher is adaptable, flexible and open to feedback. If you need to, gather student voice and feedback from your mentor. Adapt your practice, modify your planning and resources and keep looking for ways to grow and develop. Term two could be the perfect time to enrol in some [professional development workshops](#) or join a [cluster](#) in your region. Keep learning, to ensure student needs are responded to.

Kia manawanui, e hoa. Oh, and don't forget ... breathe!

Atu i konei



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Hai konei, hai konā!

