

Matt Barnacott

Over 25 years, Matt has worked in a number of roles within the education sector, including as a teacher aid, Applied Behaviour Analysis therapist, Behaviour Support Worker, and as a classroom teacher at various schools in Wellington and the Manawatū. Matt's interest in Japanese language and culture took him to Japan, where he lived and taught for three years. For the past five years, he has taught in a Gifted and Talented Education classroom in Palmerston North.

In addition to a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology, Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Special Education) and a Postgraduate Diploma in Teaching, Matt has completed the REACH Certificate of Effective Practice in Gifted Education. Undertaking this study has had a significant impact on his approach to working with gifted learners. He hopes that the educational and developmental needs of these students can become more widely understood, and pedagogy that supports these needs adopted as part of normal classroom practice.

Matt's curriculum strengths lie in literacy, social sciences and languages. He is passionate about te reo Māori, and committed to integrating te ao Māori into his classroom practice. Matt has recently completed study around culturally responsive pedagogy; understanding giftedness from different cultural perspectives is an area of particular interest.

Matt lives with his wife, two school-age children, and a menagerie of animals in Feilding. When not at school or spending time with his family, much of Matt's spare time is devoted to his role as musical director of a Brazilian drumming group which can often be found leading parades and community events around the Manawatū and beyond.