

Learner Agency



What is Learner Agency?

Learner agency is about children being active participants in their learning. They are involved in setting goals, making decisions about how they learn and reflecting on their progress.

For example, in the classroom this might look like students choosing from a range of activities to demonstrate their understanding of a concept—such as creating a poster, writing a story, or building a model—and then sharing how their choice supported their learning.

Teachers support this by creating safe, supportive environments and guiding students as they build confidence, independence and resilience. Learner agency also helps children understand themselves as learners—what works for them, how they overcome challenges and how they continue to grow. This approach prepares students to be motivated, self-managing and lifelong learners.



Why is it Important?

Learner agency is central to Te Mātaiaho, the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum, which encourages students to take an active role in their learning. It helps them become confident, self-managing and adaptable learners, ready to thrive in a changing world.

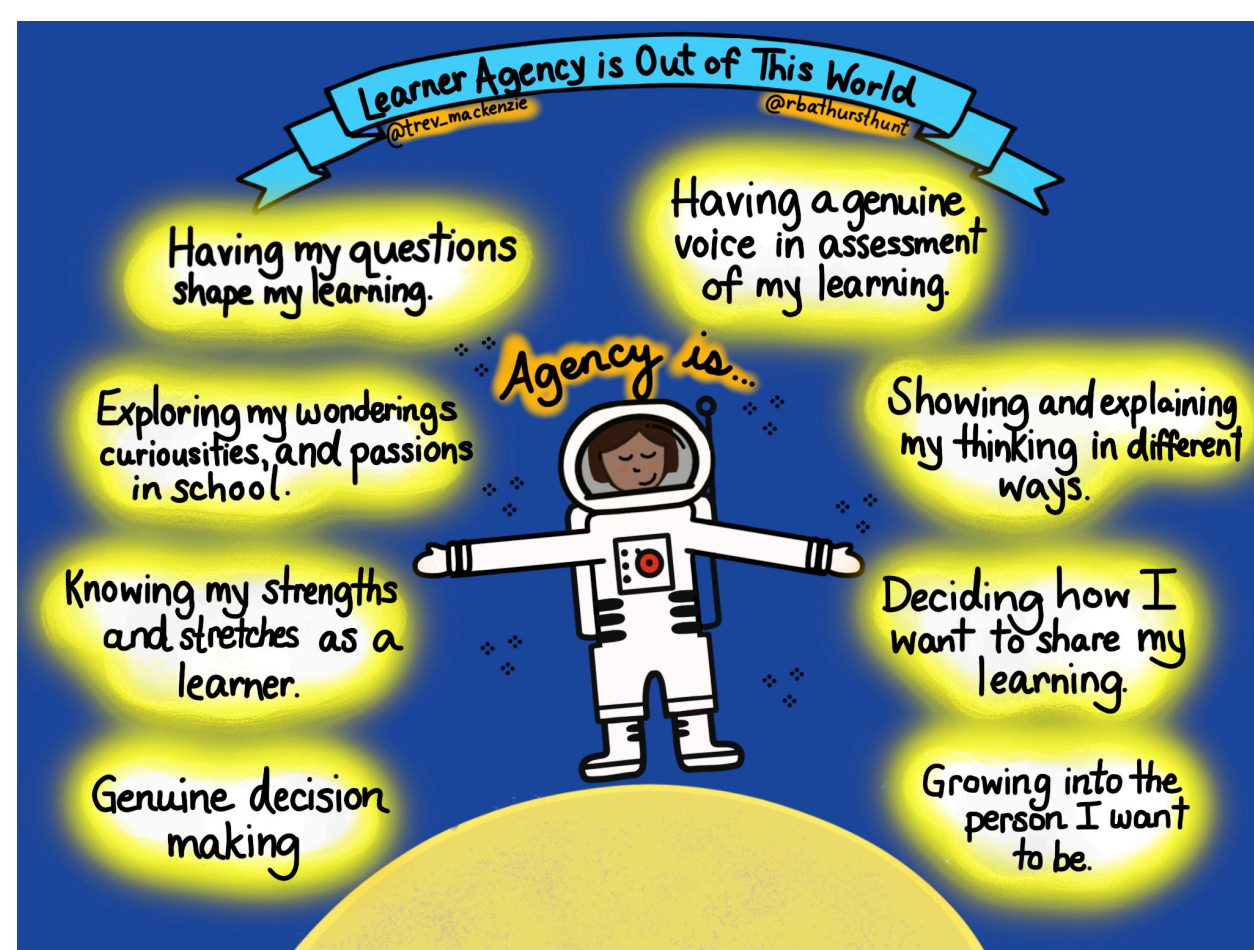


Image sourced from: [Katie Martin](#)



Links

- [Learner Agency Explained - The New Zealand Curriculum](#)
- [Continuum of choice: Teacher centred to learner driven: This graphic by Barbara Bray and Kathleen McCluskey is a useful guideline.](#)
- [How schools develop learner agency: An article from the Getting Smart website](#)