

REPORT OF THE ADVISORY GROUP ON EARLY LEARNING

30 JUNE 2015

Ministry of Education
National Office
45-47 Pipitea Street, Thorndon
Private Bag 1666, Wellington 6011
Telephone: (04) 463 8000
Fax: (04) 463 8001
Email: information.officer@minedu.govt.nz

© Crown copyright 2015

Permission to reproduce: The copyright authorises reproduction of this work, in whole or in part, so long as no charge is made for the supply of copies and the integrity and attribution of the work as a publication of the Ministry of Education is not interfered with in any way.

All rights reserved.

Enquiries should be made to the Ministry of Education.

ISBN – 978-0-478-16572-2 (web)
978-0-478-16573-9 (print)

Foreword

In December 2014 the Minister of Education, Hon Hekia Parata, appointed the Advisory Group on Early Learning to recommend improvements to implementing Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum framework, *Te Whāriki*. The Minister also asked us to recommend strategies for fostering continuity of learning from birth to eight years. We submit this report of our recommendations with the support of every member of the group.

Our examination of current implementation of *Te Whāriki* and continuity of early learning was based on extensive evidence and research. Our online consultation attracted more than 1,000 public submissions, and we met with prominent early years researchers, advisors, advocates and policymakers.

Our recommendations accord with our Terms of Reference by having a strong practical emphasis. Moreover, we are pleased to include a plan for implementing them.

I am most grateful for the expertise and contributions of my Advisory Group colleagues: Dame Dr Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, Jan Tinetti, Jan Taouma, Brenda Soutar, Ali Glasgow, Carol Hartley, Adelle Broadmore, Dr Lesley Rameka and Jeanette Clarkin-Phillips. I also acknowledge the support of Andrew McLoughlin and his colleagues in the Ministry of Education.

It has been a privilege to contribute to this important work.

Naku noa

Nā



Associate Professor Joce Nuttall

Chair

Contents

Executive Summary.....	6
Recommendations	6
About these recommendations.....	8
How this report is organised.....	8
The context in which the Advisory Group worked	9
Some early years settings are more effective than others.....	9
Re-engagement with <i>Te Whāriki</i> is needed.....	9
Local and cultural knowledge is crucial to implementing <i>Te Whāriki</i>	10
The workforce is not fully qualified	11
An uneven qualifications base risks undermining investment	11
Transition to school can have an impact on continuity of learning	12
Recommendation 1.....	14
Recommendation 2.....	15
Features of 21 st century learning.....	16
incorporating Kaupapa Māori theory	17
Incorporating Pasifika concepts and practices	17
Recommendation 3.....	19
Recommendations 4, 5 and 6.....	20
Recommendation 4	20
Recommendation 5	21
Recommendation 6	21
Recommendation 7.....	22
Recommendation 8.....	24
Recommendations 9 and 10.....	26
Recommendation 9	26
Recommendation 10	26
Recommendations 11 and 12.....	27
Recommendation 11	27
Recommendation 12	27
Recommendation 13.....	28

Recommendation 14	29
Recommendation 15	30
Recommendation 16	31
Recommendation 17	32
Recommendations 18 and 19	34
Recommendation 18.....	34
Recommendation 19.....	35
Recommendation 20	36
Implementation plan	37
Appendix A: Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group on Early Learning	39
Appendix B: Advisory Group on Early Learning process	44
Appendix C: Individuals and organisations consulted during face-to-face consultation	45
Appendix D: Overview of online consultation responses	46
Appendix E: Synopsis of evidence on the implementation of <i>Te Whāriki</i>	50
Appendix F: Key documents consulted by AGEL members	56

Executive Summary

The Advisory Group on Early Learning was appointed in December 2014 to recommend improvements to implementing Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum framework, *Te Whāriki*. We were also asked to recommend strategies for fostering children's continuity of learning from birth to eight years.

The following recommendations are based on our online consultation, which attracted more than 1,000 submissions, and meetings with prominent early years researchers, advisors, advocates and policymakers. Our recommendations have the practical emphasis our terms of reference required (see Appendix A).

We consider all the recommendations to be high priority, and we list them separately or in related themes. Our report also includes implementation plans based on the timeframe we accorded each recommendation (see Implementation Plan p37).

Recommendations

The Advisory Group recommends that:

1. the Ministry of Education seed fund between \$500 and \$1,000 per site to establish up to 200 early-learning clusters across Aotearoa New Zealand, to pool the knowledge and resources of teachers, whānau and communities
2. the Ministry of Education commission an update of *Te Whāriki*
3. the Ministry of Education commission the digitisation of *Te Whāriki*
4. the Ministry of Education call for tenders for a major professional development initiative (2016-2020 inclusive) focused on leadership for learning in early childhood education and care settings (birth to five years), and emphasising leadership of implementation of *Te Whāriki* for all learners, and Māori perspectives and leadership for bicultural practice
5. the initiative take the form of an intervention-based, integrated research and development programme that allows for simultaneous professional development and tracking of affordances, barriers and outcomes related to implementing *Te Whāriki*
6. the initiative have as a major output a series of modular web-based professional development resources designed to foster and enhance leadership-for-learning practices in early childhood education and care services, and suitable for leaders to use independently when implementing *Te Whāriki* as bicultural practice
7. the Ministry of Education redirect current early childhood education professional development funding to a programme of sustained professional development in early years settings (birth to eight years) focused on implementing the updated *Te Whāriki* and practice grounded in kaupapa Māori theory
8. the early childhood sector collaborate to commission development and ongoing resourcing of a comprehensive, web-based clearinghouse to inform teaching, learning and professional development in early years education, emphasising kaupapa Māori pedagogical approaches

9. all early childhood education and care services make available teacher inquiry time equivalent to two hours' non-contact time per qualified teacher per week, to support continuing professional development activities
10. all early childhood education and care services make available teacher inquiry time equivalent to two hours non-contact time per provisionally registered teacher per week, to support inquiry-based induction and mentoring
11. a description of the links between the updated *Te Whāriki* and the 'Key Competencies' and Te Tino Uaratanga o Te Aho Matua be added to *Te Whāriki*, the *New Zealand Curriculum*, *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *Te Aho Matua*
12. these links be published on a poster and distributed to all puna, kura, kōhanga reo, schools and early childhood education and care services
13. the New Zealand Government amend the law to allow primary schools to enrol five-year-olds by cohort, or individually, or both
14. primary schools consider establishing reception classes for five-year-olds, with curriculum planning, assessment and evaluation based on *Te Whāriki*
15. the clearinghouse created by Recommendation 8 be a repository for case studies of effective transition to school policies and practices
16. the Ministry of Education require all schools and early childhood services to develop, implement and evaluate transition to school policies, in consultation with local stakeholders
17. the Ministry of Education update arrangements to support children with special educational needs, and urgently resolve funding issues to support children with special needs and their families as they transition to school
18. the TeachNZ scholarship programme be extended to target recruitment and preparation of Māori and Pasifika teacher education graduates into post-graduate programmes focused on special educational needs
19. the schools sector develop policies and practices for recruiting allied staff fluent in te reo Māori and Pasifika languages, and with specialised cultural knowledge, to help children transition to school via their own language pathways
20. the Ministry of Education commission a data-linking project, connecting information generated by the *Growing Up in New Zealand* study with Education Review Office reports on early years services attended by children taking part in the study.

About these recommendations

The overlap between recommendations is deliberate. Together they comprise an inter-related strategy for strengthening implementation of *Te Whāriki*¹ and supporting continuity of learning across the early years. Merely limited action on any one is likely to undermine the effectiveness of one or more of the others.

Some recommendations are relatively modest and quickly achievable; others will require further development of long-term strategy and implementation planning. Some are directed specifically at the Ministry of Education; others call on the early years sector itself to develop new ways of working. Some recommendations apply specifically to 'early childhood education and care' (services for children from birth to five); others to 'early years' education (services for children birth to eight, thereby incorporating the early years of compulsory schooling).

How this report is organised

The section immediately following this one describes the significant features of the backdrop against which the Advisory Group went about its task:

- some early years settings are less effective than others
- re-engagement with *Te Whāriki* is needed
- local and cultural knowledge are crucial to implementing *Te Whāriki*
- the workforce is not fully qualified
- an uneven qualifications base risks undermining investment
- transition to school can threaten continuity of learning.

Subsequent sections deal with each of our 20 recommendations. The last section presents, in table form, an implementation plan for each recommendation.

¹ Ministry of Education, (1996). *Te Whāriki: Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.

The context in which the Advisory Group worked

Some early years settings are more effective than others

Our terms of reference signalled the New Zealand Government's willingness to invest in the capacity of communities, teachers, kaiako, pouako, family and whānau to strengthen support for learning and development across the early years (birth to eight years of age). However, system-wide improvement is complex, long-term work, and also requires significant investment from the sector itself. We acknowledge the history of day-to-day practice, policy work and research that has characterised efforts to build a world-class, early years education system, one that upholds and fosters the wellbeing, identity, abilities and potential of all children.

Notwithstanding this, we saw evidence suggesting that some early years settings are less effective than others in dealing with the many factors influencing children's learning and development. These factors – including health, family resources and access to high-quality early education – are dynamically inter-related. High-quality early years education alone cannot address all the needs of children whose life circumstances make them vulnerable, but it can be very beneficial.² Early childhood services, kōhanga reo, schools and kura that have the most beneficial impact are those that mobilise local and system-wide resources to overcome the persistent challenges facing early years curriculum implementation. These challenges include:

- building teacher, family and community capacity to implement early years education that reflects this country's dual heritage and is inclusive of *all* children
- optimising learning throughout the early years in a way that reflects *Te Whāriki* as a bicultural document
- strengthening systems and resources to support world-class, early years provision unique to Aotearoa New Zealand's cultural context and to *Te Whāriki*'s implicit links to Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The 2011 Early Childhood Education Taskforce report³ recommended evaluating implementation of *Te Whāriki* as a step toward addressing these challenges. Subsequent Education Review Office work suggested that only a minority of early childhood education and care services were implementing early childhood curriculum on the basis of thorough understanding and consistent application of *Te Whāriki*.⁴

At the same time, government policy is geared towards enhancing continuity of learning across the early years, and the group's terms of reference were rooted in these concerns.

Re-engagement with *Te Whāriki* is needed

Our work proceeded on an understanding of *Te Whāriki* as a curriculum policy document owned and mandated by the New Zealand government. Fortunately, it was developed in close consultation with those in the field, and the field retains a strong, ongoing commitment to it as a framework for practice. *Te Whāriki*

² Karoly, L., Greenwood P., Everingham S., Hoube J., Kilburn R., Rydell P., Sanders M. and Chiesa J. (1998). *Investing in our children: What we know and don't know about the costs and benefits of early childhood interventions*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR898.html

³ Ministry of Education. (2011). *An agenda for amazing children: Final report of the ECE taskforce*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

⁴ Education Review Office, (2013). *Working with Te Whāriki*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

is a potentially powerful tool for mediating teacher and teaching-team decision-making in the day-to-day implementation of early curriculum.

However, it is by no means the only such tool. Others include:

- theories of child development
- culture-specific knowledge
- family and whānau aspirations for their children
- knowledge of the likely next steps in children's learning journeys
- tools for formative assessment
- meanings of education-specific concepts such as 'continuity of learning'.

These tools must be mobilised simultaneously and in highly integrated ways, making early years teaching a complex and demanding profession.

One of *Te Whāriki*'s most powerful aspects is its capacity to function as a 'meta-tool', alerting teachers to the range of other tools they can draw on to inform their practice. However, our public consultation and further discussion persuaded us that implementation of the early childhood curriculum has steadily drifted away from direct engagement with *Te Whāriki*.

We therefore recommend strong re-engagement with *Te Whāriki*, including practical strategies to support its implementation.

Local and cultural knowledge is crucial to implementing *Te Whāriki*

One of the main ways to ensure effective implementation is to build the capacity of the early years sector to use *Te Whāriki* as a guide for determining local practice. Its fundamental premise is that curriculum arises from a localised 'weaving together' of valued knowledge and practice.

Teachers in high-quality early years settings effect the curriculum with young children and families with warmth, attentiveness and a profound knowledge of individual children, their peers, and their family and community. This knowledge comes from engaging with local people and the knowledge, language and other resources they offer. Teachers create optimal environments when they know about typical, culturally-valued patterns of learning and development, and can identify opportunities to facilitate next directions in children's learning.

Some children face additional learning and development challenges, including the very young (infants and toddlers) and those experiencing the developmental effects of poverty. These children need teachers who:

- are capable of exercising sound professional judgement on the basis of sophisticated knowledge
- interact confidently with families and whānau
- advocate for children
- can cogently express their expertise when interacting with professionals from other disciplines, such as health and social work
- can make the most of such interactions by taking account of cultural difference

- know how to teach in response to additional learning and development needs.

The workforce is not fully qualified

These demands suggest that formal qualifications are essential. The Advisory Group debated whether all early education and care services teachers should be qualified to the equivalent of a bachelor's degree.

We acknowledge the continuing professional and industrial campaigns here and overseas aimed at lifting the workforce's qualifications, and the uneven qualifications base still in effect here. All teachers of five- to eight-year-olds must have a degree, but the same does not apply to all teachers of children from birth to four. The group therefore supports, as a professional principle, moves towards a fully qualified early childhood education and care workforce in Aotearoa New Zealand.

At the same time, we also acknowledge that evidence for a direct causal relationship between universal teacher qualifications and child outcomes in early childhood education and care is inconclusive.

Some evidence suggests a ceiling beyond which the positive impact of lifting overall qualifications levels tapers off.^{5 6} However, this may be related less to qualifications *per se* than to the difficulty of isolating teacher qualifications from other variables that tend to correlate with high qualifications. US research⁷ suggests, for example, that higher qualifications in childcare settings correlate with lower staff turnover; lower staff turnover is related to more stable attachments between children, teachers and families; and stable attachment is known to enhance learning opportunities, particularly for infants and toddlers.

Furthermore, the relationships between important influences are likely to be multi-directional, and influenced by other features of the education and care setting, such as:

- the degree of sophistication of leadership practices
- access to professional development opportunities
- time to respond to these opportunities
- employment of teachers with diverse backgrounds and experience.

Given these considerations, as well as limited financial resources, our capacity-building recommendations target investment that will have the greatest impact and most immediate effect: local community engagement and professional development programmes on effective implementation of *Te Whāriki*, and particularly the development of bicultural practice and effective leadership.

An uneven qualifications base risks undermining investment

We caution that the return on investing in the relationship between capacity building and children's experiences may be limited when the qualifications base is uneven. Teachers without initial teacher education (ITE) may not have the conceptual tools they need to take best advantage of professional development. For example, professional development in key areas such as literacy and mathematics may

⁵ Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Taggart, B. (2004). *Final report: Effective provision for preschool education (EPPE) project*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.

⁶ Siraj-Blatchford, I., Sylva, K., Muttock, S., Gilden, R. and Bell, D. (2002). *Researching effective pedagogy in the early years: Research Report No 356*. London: DfES.

⁷ Whitebook, M. & Sakai, L. (2004). *By a thread: How child care centers hold on to teachers, how teachers build lasting careers*. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

be ineffective if teachers do not already know the core concepts of literacy and mathematics pedagogy. These are usually acquired during ITE.

We also looked at the effectiveness of current ITE, and were struck by lack of evidence for a positive relationship between it and curriculum implementation in early childhood education. This does not necessarily mean that the relationship does not exist; just that it has not yet been well-documented in relation to *Te Whāriki*.

Nor was the group persuaded that current ITE programmes offer consistent opportunities for candidates to engage deeply with *Te Whāriki*, the pedagogical implications of its 'Principles', 'Strands' and 'Learning Outcomes', and its relationship to the *New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*. Our consultation reminded us that the development of *Te Whāriki* in the early 1990s assumed implementation in a context of fast-growing levels of teacher qualifications and comprehensive professional development. Qualification levels have risen strongly since then, but we saw no evidence of a corresponding improvement in *Te Whāriki* implementation.

Further attention to the relationship between ITE and curriculum implementation in the early years is, therefore, desirable.

Transition to school can have an impact on continuity of learning

Our terms of reference required us to recommend practical strategies to enhance continuity of learning across the early years (from birth to eight). So we paid thorough, though not exclusive, attention to the transition between early childhood education and care settings, and formal schooling.

Children's experiences of transition

The first major transition for most children in this country is not to school, but from home into an extra-familial, early childhood education and care setting.

This can occur for children as young as six weeks. For some, it is entry to a kindergarten programme; for others, this transition can be at any age between infancy and four, and may be into:

- another home-based setting
- a long-day education and care setting
- a parent-led service
- kōhanga reo or another language immersion setting
- some combination of these.

For many, this transition also marks a shift from their home language to a different language of instruction.

Much of the abundant international literature on transition to school and continuity-of-learning policies, practices and strategies does not speak directly to the New Zealand context. This is because our children usually start school on or close to their fifth birthdays, even though six is the mandatory age for school

entry. New Zealand's education sector, and society in general, has traditionally believed this unique practice benefits children because it allows personalised entry.⁸ However, several researchers report that it poses challenges for them: '[T]he reality is that children often find themselves involved in bewildering large group activities during their first days, with no particular arrangements made to support their transition.'⁹

Our public consultation showed that transition policies and processes vary widely. We nevertheless took into account features that the local and international transition to school literature identifies as crucial for children, families and whānau:

- belonging, wellbeing and feeling 'suitable' at school
- recognition and acknowledgement of culture
- respectful, reciprocal relationships
- engagement in learning
- learning dispositions and identity as a learner
- positive teacher expectations
- building on funds of knowledge from early childhood education and home.¹⁰

Transition into early education and care settings may barely disrupt a child's learning and development or it may seriously interrupt their social, emotional and learning trajectories. Likewise, transition to school or kura may be ideal for child and family, or may mean significant setbacks for their learning. Transition can be particularly problematic for children whose early childhood education and care have been in a home language other than English, or who have additional educational needs because of disability, unless funding and expertise are made available.

We believe that for many children starting school, especially those without experience of early childhood education and care services, *Te Whāriki* is the most appropriate curriculum framework to inform their early schooling, not the *New Zealand Curriculum*. Our recommendations therefore emphasise enhancing the links between key curriculum documents and support for teachers and early years settings to develop sound transition policies and practices.

⁸ Hartley, C., Rogers, P., Smith, J., Peters, S., & Carr, M. (2012). Crossing the border: a community negotiates the transition from early childhood to primary school. Wellington: NZCER.

⁹ Peters, S. (2010). *Literature review: Transition from early childhood to school*. Wellington: Ministry of Education, p. 7

¹⁰ Peters (2010), p. 15.

Recommendation 1

The Ministry of Education seed fund between \$500 and \$1,000 per site to establish up to 200 early learning clusters across Aotearoa New Zealand, to pool the knowledge and resources of teachers, whānau and communities

Our terms of reference drew particular attention to the role of communities, families and whānau in supporting early learning. In responding to this, we became aware of initiatives that have teachers, families and whānau meeting, either independently or under an umbrella organisation, to collaborate and share experiences of learning, understanding and ideas to strengthen operations and practice. For example, clustering in Christchurch is allowing schools and early childhood services there to respond together to the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake.

Te kōhanga reo's purapura clusters

This model dates from the late 1980s, and there are approximately 120 purapura across the country. Each comprises about five kōhanga, and draws on both paid staff and the expertise of extended whānau with skills in te reo, financial management, information technology and so on.

Purapura have helped many individuals and kōhanga build capacity so they can better manage and understand the kaupapa of kōhanga reo. They are a hugely cost-effective way to develop and support Te Kōhanga Reo Trust Board and the wider community.

Our recommendation would build on the success of nga purapura and other parent-led clustering arrangements. They capture the widespread expertise of local communities for a modest government outlay.

Early years sector clusters can pool the knowledge and resources of education, care and special education services, bilingual centres, puna reo and kōhanga reo immersion programmes and schools (and potentially extend to local intermediate and secondary schools). Small, localised clusters would forge strong relationships with each other and the families they serve. They could also be more widely distributed, even web-based, and organised around specific projects or expertise.

Seeding grants of \$500 to \$1,000 per site would allow clusters to reimburse meeting expenses, such as supper and a koha for the host centre or school. They would develop their own focus for activities, which could be information-sharing, developing transition and continuity tools and networks, professional development and/or resource sharing.

Applications for seed funding would be based on a one-page action plan (including indicative budget) and reimbursed on the basis of a one-page report (with receipts for expenditure attached).

Recommendation 2

The Ministry of Education commission an update of *Te Whāriki*

The Advisory Group acknowledges and unanimously endorses the nationally and internationally high regard in which *Te Whāriki* is held. It was universally considered ahead of its time when it was released, and it remains a taonga for the early childhood education and care sector. It remains notable for the government's comprehensive investment in developing it, and for being the first bicultural curriculum framework anywhere in the world. Since the early 1990s, much scholarship in early childhood education here, and curriculum policy development and critique internationally, has referenced *Te Whāriki* as a landmark innovation.

However, it is nearly 20 years since *Te Whāriki* was released, and more than 20 since the draft version was introduced in 1993. Multiple submissions to the Advisory Group, both from experts and via the online consultation, expressed a desire for updating *Te Whāriki* to ensure it continues to help professionals optimise young children's learning and development.

We therefore recommend that government commission an update, ensuring that extensive engagement with the sector is part of the process. The update should also respect the current document's underpinning professional and policy investment, and reinforce its deep and innovative cultural roots.

Five major factors influenced our development of this recommendation.

1. Childhoods have changed since the early 1990s. Significant international and schools-sector scholarship takes account of 21st-century learning contexts, including rapid technological change, and the implications of globalisation and climate change.
2. Individuals both in the Advisory Group and the consultation expressed concern that *Te Whāriki* has been subject to 'drift', particularly with respect to its explicit bicultural concepts. Extensive scholarship in theory and practice through a kaupapa Māori lens, and underpinned by Te Tiriti o Waitangi, has taken place since the early 1990s. The group believes this should be brought to bear on the current document.
3. The 1993 draft included extensive Pasifika content that was excised from the final (1996) version. This remains a serious omission. This omission must be urgently addressed to support effective implementation of *Te Whāriki* in Pasifika early childhood services and for Pasifika students in the early years of school.
4. The current document's links with the *New Zealand Curriculum* framework are obsolete. We believe that *Te Whāriki*, the *New Zealand Curriculum/Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *Te Aho Matua* should be amended to incorporate key principles and content, establishing clear links between the frameworks, emphasising 'Key Competencies' and *Te Tino Uaratanga o Te Aho Matua*, and their connection with *Te Whāriki*'s 'Goals' and 'Strands' (see Recommendations 11 and 12).
5. We undertook our work knowing of a simultaneous update of Group Special Education activities. This will have implications for the content of *Te Whāriki*. We do not address these implications here but recommend the *Te Whāriki* update pay careful attention to curriculum implementation for children with special educational needs across the early years, including updating the language the current document uses when talking about special educational needs.

Features of 21st century learning

Our recommendation to update *Te Whāriki* by making its future-focused principles and content more explicit aligns with advice from the Ministry of Education's 21st Century Learning Reference Group,¹¹ which has said:

A number of New Zealand early childhood centres and schools are well-advanced in their use of digital technologies for learning. Our challenge is 'scaling up' these examples of successful innovative practice so they become the norm. We believe this will require a concerted, system-wide approach using a mix of 'top-down' and 'ground-up' strategies.¹²

Te Whāriki demonstrates a similar perspective:

New Zealand is part of a world revolution in communication, technology, work, and leisure. Change in these and other spheres is a feature of everyday life. To cope with such changes, children need both the confidence to develop their own perspectives and the capacity to continue acquiring new knowledge and skills. The curriculum provides an educational foundation that supports the full range of skills that children will need as life-long learners.¹³

New Zealand's early childhood centres and schools are well placed to plan for and respond to these changes. We endorse the 21st Century Learning Reference Group's recommendations. We particularly support a 'concerted, system-wide approach' to ensure early childhood centres and primary schools have the infrastructure, resources, curriculum design and robust research and evaluation strategies to guarantee all learners have even-handed access to digital opportunities.

The OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation has identified the key principles of innovative learning environments.¹⁴ They are based on 125 cases gathered from 29 systems in 23 countries, with 40 of them developed into fully-researched case studies. The principles position learners as key participants in learning contexts, actively engaged in and developing an understanding of their own learning, and taking part in co-operative learning opportunities that reflect its social nature.

The principles also insist that:

- educators and education services focus on learners' motivations
- they understand the role of emotion in achievement
- they are sensitive to individual differences between learners
- they provide learners with appropriate cognitive challenges
- they clarify assessment expectations and strategies, with a strong emphasis on formative feedback.

Connections across knowledge areas, and with local and global communities, are also important.

¹¹ 21st Century Learning Reference Group. (2014, May). *Future focused learning in connected communities*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

¹² Ibid, p26.

¹³ *Te Whāriki*, p18.

¹⁴ OECD. (2013). *Innovative Learning Environments*. Educational Research and Innovation. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/innovative-learning-environments_9789264203488-en

The philosophy and practices of many early years settings in Aotearoa New Zealand already align with these principles. The Advisory Group believes that to further embed them and their related practices, it is time to update *Te Whāriki*'s language, examples and contexts. New Zealand schools are already working toward developing these principles in their own settings, and this is an opportunity to develop a shared language for and understandings of future-focused principles. Doing so will further strengthen continuity of learning for children from birth to eight years old. This kind of sharing should not result in a 'push down' from the school curriculum; rather, it is the opportunity for a 'push up' into early years settings in schools.

We see an opportunity to update the information in the 'Curriculum Implementation' section (Part A) of *Te Whāriki* to reflect these principles. This would also be an opportunity to make explicit the links between these principles and the foundational concepts of empowerment (whakamana), holistic development (kotahitanga), family and community (whānau tangata), and relationships (ngā hononga), and the strands. The examples featuring infants, toddlers and young children and the 'Questions for Reflection' could be updated to include innovation and future-focused pedagogy.

Incorporating kaupapa Māori theory

Since the launch of *Te Whāriki*, kaupapa Māori theory has become a valid theoretical approach for Māori aspirational development across education settings, extending to the academic context. The Advisory Group believes it is consistent with this development to strengthen *Te Whāriki* as a bicultural policy document by applying a kaupapa Māori lens.

Kaupapa Māori theory has been described as the practice and philosophy of 'being Māori'.¹⁵ It perceives the world from a Māori cultural perspective, assumes Māori values, understandings and behaviours as normative, and affirms and legitimates Māori ways of knowing and being. This effects positive change within and through educational contexts. Kaupapa Māori theory is transformational, promising to strengthen *Te Whāriki*'s bicultural approach, make practices arising from *Te Whāriki* more authentic, and re-centre biculturalism in the contemporary early years context.

Incorporating Pasifika concepts and practices

The Advisory Group is adamant that taking Pasifika content from the final version of *Te Whāriki* in 1996 was a serious mistake. Without specific mention of Pasifika perspectives and direct links to the 'Key Competencies', the language and culture of Pasifika children and families disappear from view. This situation persists despite the Ministry of Education's goal that the proportion of Pasifika children starting school who have participated in ECE will increase from 86.2 percent in 2012 to 98 percent in 2016¹⁶.

It is essential that early years curriculum policy identifies Pasifika children and families, and acknowledges their languages and cultural identities.

All children's intellectual capacity is built on a linguistic platform; it must be a strong basis for continuing academic success. Thus it is imperative that language programmes established in early childhood education and care settings continue into primary school. The Samoan community, for example, has

¹⁵ Smith, G. H. (1992). *Tane-nui-a-rangi's legacy: Propping up the sky. Kaupapa Māori as resistance and intervention*. Paper presented at NZARE/AARE Joint conference, Deakin University Australia. November 20, 1992. [Subsequently published in *Creating space in institutional settings for Māori*. Auckland: International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, University of Auckland].

¹⁶ Ministry of Education. (2012). *Pasifika education plan 2013-2017*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

nurtured and advocated for its language for nearly 40 years. It is now this country's third most-spoken language. A high proportion of Pasifika early childhood centres and bilingual school classrooms are Samoan.

Closer language links between early childhood education settings and bilingual primary schools can lift academic achievement. Contemporary language learning theories propose that first (or mother tongue) language success is transferred to spoken and written skills in another (usually English) language. These programmes also give the child a positive view of their first world-view language, which endows them with a sense of well-being.

The Advisory Group also examined overall strategy for resourcing Pacific languages in early childhood education, considering local and international evidence of best practice. Resources for learning Pasifika languages are just as important as resources for learning any other language. Constructing a dedicated online platform for resources (see Recommendation 8) would contribute to the education and resourcing needs of teachers who can use Pasifika languages well. It would also make visual and print resources readily available for high quality, early years programmes.

Recommendation 3

The Ministry of Education commission the digitisation of *Te Whāriki*

The Advisory Group applauds the Minister's move to restore the implementation of *Te Whāriki* to its central place in early years educational practice. A fully digitised version of the updated document would enhance this implementation and allow easy online access by teachers, whānau and families.

It would include hyperlinks *within* the document (allowing, for example, users to cross-reference learning outcomes under one strand with related learning outcomes under another strand). The digitised document would also embed links to take users *outside* the document to key digital (or embedded PDF) sources of information and advice. The Education Review Office has developed excellent resources of this kind, for example, developing guidance for kōhanga reo and other early childhood education and care services. It provides indicators of effective practice for both teaching and learning, and for good governance.

Digitising *Te Whāriki* would allow users – school-based educators, other professionals and teacher education students – to quickly develop a rounded view of the early years sector, and a sound understanding of *Te Whāriki* as a key resource for policy and practice. An extra benefit of digitisation would be the speed with which links could be developed and updated. The cost, compared with updating print resources, would be low.

We recognise, in making this recommendation, that some early childhood education and care services would prefer to rely on the print version of *Te Whāriki*. We ask the Ministry of Education to ensure print versions are still available on request.

Recommendations 4, 5 and 6

Recommendation 4

The Ministry of Education call for tenders for a major professional development initiative (2016-2020 inclusive) focused on leadership for learning in early childhood education and care settings (birth to five years), and emphasising leadership of implementation of *Te Whāriki* for all learners, and Māori perspectives and leadership for bicultural practice

Both national¹⁷ and international^{18 19} evidence establish how crucial effective leadership is in raising and sustaining levels of curriculum implementation and quality practice across the early years. This evidence has been comprehensively put into practice in schools. However, there has been no similar level of investment in early childhood education and care leadership here.

The Advisory Group believes that investing in leadership development will be highly cost-effective for the government. It would emphasise implementation of *Te Whāriki* for all learners, engagement with families and whānau, and leadership for bicultural practice. Increasing the capacity of leaders to foster local practice improvements can offset the need for whole-centre professional development, which is expensive and needs significant local investment (including, in some services, overtime payments).

We also note the need to move leadership concepts beyond individualised notions of charismatic, persuasive and positional leadership. The education and care sector urgently needs to develop new forms of culturally and professionally relevant leadership that emphasise collective responsibility for enhancing practice. Government should give priority to resourcing initiatives that encourage whānau leadership and enhance continuity of learning. We acknowledge the importance of building leadership in parent- and whānau-led services, and our attention was drawn to examples of whānau exercising collective leadership of governance, curriculum and pedagogy. We see the potential for learning from these examples, particularly in relation to fostering family and whānau responsibility for leading learning continuity.

We recognise the untapped potential in communities. With appropriate leadership, they can develop the capacity to achieve their own aspirational goals. Much can be learned from Māori models of leadership, where whānau take roles acquired through active participation, observation and experience in other settings. Each individual benefits the collective with their knowledge, talents, learning and experience, and experienced mentors guide the apprenticeship. Enhancing and upholding the mana of the whānau, hapū, iwi, community and kaupapa is critical to engaging whānau. Examples of this are seen in the way marae, kōhanga reo, puna reo, kura kaupapa Māori, kura ā-iwi and many other Māori organisations function.

¹⁷ Ord, K., Mane, J., Smorti, S., Carroll-Lind, J., Robinson, L., Armstrong-Read, A., et al. (2013). *Te whakapakari kaiaarahi ahuatanga ako kohungahunga: Developing pedagogical leadership in early childhood education*. Wellington: Te Tari Puna Ora New Zealand Childcare Association.

¹⁸ Whalley, M. E. (2011). Leading and managing in the early years. In L. Miller & C. Cable (Eds), *Professionalization, leadership and management in the early years*, pp. 13-28. London: Sage.

¹⁹ Siraj-Blatchford, I., & Manni, L. (2007). *Effective leadership in the early years sector: The ELEYS study*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.

Recommendation 5

The initiative take the form of an intervention-based, integrated research and development programme that allows for simultaneous professional development and tracking of affordances, barriers and outcomes related to implementing *Te Whāriki*

From the outset, the Advisory Group was struck by the absence of robust evidence of outcomes from the implementation of *Te Whāriki*. We sought further advice to check if this was a valid concern. The consultation and a commissioned literature review (see Appendix E) confirmed it was. A considerable literature critiques *Te Whāriki* as a curriculum policy framework and describes its application in practice. However, literature evaluating its effectiveness or identifying barriers and affordances to implementation is very limited.

We believe that, consistent with Recommendation 2 to update *Te Whāriki*, future investment should focus on better implementation of an updated document, rather than a long-term study of outcomes.

As our Terms of Reference indicate, international evidence is overwhelming for the effectiveness of high-quality, early years education in lifting academic outcomes and minimising risks of social exclusion. We noted at the beginning of this report that curriculum policy is just one factor in developing an effective whole-of-system approach to getting the best results. Projects should combine leadership-for-learning capacity-building with systematic tracking of the intervention's impacts. This will simultaneously improve leadership for learning *and* identify factors that influence the implementation of *Te Whāriki* at the level of individual leaders, whole centres and services, and system-wide.

Recommendation 6

The initiative have as a major output a series of modular web-based professional development resources designed to foster and enhance leadership-for-learning practices in early childhood education and care services, and suitable for leaders to use independently when implementing *Te Whāriki* as bicultural practice

Insights arising from professional development interventions deserve to be more widely accessible. Previous initiatives, such as Centres of Innovation, have generated important new knowledge about professional practice and implementation of *Te Whāriki*, but other services have not necessarily accessed this information. Nor is it available in a scalable way for system-wide application.

We see the need for major investment in a leadership-for-learning initiative, along with a systematic research programme. This should result in accessible resources usable beyond the immediate participants. Those who conduct the programme should be expected to collaborate with participants to produce a set of web-based modular resources to support *Te Whāriki* implementation and bicultural practice development. These resources would be made available to individuals, teams and whānau via a web-based, early years clearinghouse (see Recommendation 8).

Recommendation 7

The Ministry of Education redirect current early childhood education professional development funding to a programme of sustained professional development in early years settings (birth to eight years) focused on implementing the updated *Te Whāriki* and practice grounded in kaupapa Māori theory

The Advisory Group shares the concerns of those we consulted that arrangements for tendering and funding professional development programmes have resulted in a fragmented approach, and variable programme and outcome quality. We believe a comprehensive, holistic strategy, focused on implementation of *Te Whāriki* and bicultural practice, is now essential.

Tendering must ensure that Ministry-funded programmes:

- are informed by up-to-date research in their content, and in the adult-learning principles on which they are based
- focus on the implications of *Te Whāriki* for practice grounded in kaupapa Māori theory
- prioritise implementation of *Te Whāriki* with children who have special educational needs
- align with curriculum and assessment across the early years, particularly the key competencies
- provide cultural and linguistic content relevant to participants
- foster good planning and governance of curriculum implementation
- are subject to rigorous internal and external evaluation of delivery and outcomes.

There is limited availability of resources that offer better understanding of implementing *Te Whāriki* as bicultural practice. We recognise the breadth of expertise and knowledge within the early childhood and primary sectors, but teachers, kaiako and pouako have only limited access to it.

One significant resource for local practice would be a series of interviews, seminars and short presentations by New Zealand and international educationalists, researchers, teachers, pouako and kaiako on bicultural implementation of *Te Whāriki*. These could be made available online (see Recommendation 8). A series of online professional learning and development modules to cover key concepts and practices should also be developed. These should cover:

- kaupapa Māori theory, pedagogy and assessment
- connection to the local – mana whenua/tribal lands, mana tangata/whānau, hapū and iwi, mana atua/spiritual connection, mana aoturoa/Māori world, mana reo/te reo Māori
- kaitiakitanga
- rangatiratanga.

We see this recommendation as a cost-effective approach to national professional development, for government and the sector.

A national catalogue of professional learning and development topics should be developed for use across the early years. Topics should include:

- specific curriculum domains (such as early literacy, science and mathematics)

- specialised pedagogical approaches for priority learners
- language extension programmes
- engagement with families about children's learning progress.

Providing a clearinghouse (see Recommendation 8) will allow individuals and local groups to choose topics that cater to their own needs. They will be able to work through the modules at their own pace. Each module would suggest practical outcomes, including how to document progress in developing practices. These modules could be shared with other professionals, families and whānau, and used for self-review and in strategic planning. They could also constitute evidence of development for the Education Review Office as part of external review.

Recommendation 8

The early childhood sector collaborate to commission development and ongoing resourcing of a comprehensive, web-based clearinghouse to inform teaching, learning and professional development in early years education, emphasising kaupapa Māori pedagogical approaches

The Advisory Group is aware of the enormous body of excellent work on early years teaching and learning that has accumulated in Aotearoa New Zealand in recent decades. At the same time, it is also evident that many teachers and early years services do not know how or where to access this material as a resource for professional learning and development. We believe one of the most comprehensive, cost-effective and practical initiatives the sector can launch is to bring these resources together as a digital clearinghouse for access by teachers, families and whānau.

The Ministry of Education could broker the necessary collaboration, but we think the sector itself should invest significantly in implementing the clearinghouse. This should include appointing a team of editorial advisors to moderate content. An initial investment would establish the site, but ongoing additions to content would be inexpensive compared to other forms of investment (for example, funding for in-service professional development programmes) to reach a similar-sized audience.

The clearinghouse would include (but not be limited to):

- podcasts and vodcasts (or videocasts) that help teachers use te reo Māori to implement and reflect *Te Whāriki's* bicultural requirements
- links to key documents that teachers use often (for example, current regulations; *Kei Tua o te Pae*; *New Zealand Curriculum*, especially 'Key Competencies'; *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*; Education Review Office indicators for nga kōhanga reo; *Te Whātu Pokeka*; *Te Aho Matua*; *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017*)
- short guides, downloadable as PDFs, on aspects of practice (for example, mana whenua in practice, literacy with babies and toddlers, understanding autism) for teaching teams to use in planning and professional development, available in Māori, English and Pasifika languages
- interviews, seminars and short presentations produced with or by key educationalists, teachers and teaching teams on implementing *Te Whāriki*
- short podcasts and vodcasts in a range of home languages about early years education, for using with parents, family and whānau
- professional development modules on:
 - Māori understandings of and requirements for implementing bicultural aspects of *Te Whāriki* (for example, kaupapa Māori theory, pedagogy and assessment; connection to local Māori perspectives on human development, and concepts of childhood)
 - aspects of curriculum and assessment for self-directed study by individuals or groups of teachers (for example, early mathematics; digital play; concepts and practices of sustainability)
 - aspects of leadership and governance for self-directed study by individuals or groups (for example, centre self-review; leading for learning) (see also Recommendation 4)
- case studies of effective practices to support continuity of learning (see also Recommendation 15)

- resources for working with parents and fostering community capacity-building
- links to initial and continuing teacher education opportunities and providers.

We see a significant strategic opportunity to link the clearing-house site launch to the launch of an updated *Te Whāriki*. It would encourage teachers to re-engage with implementation of *Te Whāriki*.

The website would also be a resource for participants in the leading-for-learning professional development initiative (see Recommendation 4). Centre-based professional learning initiatives, facilitated by effective leaders, are cost-effective, highly responsive to local contexts, and can be implemented in the home language of the centre.

Recommendations 9 and 10

Recommendation 9

All early childhood education and care services make available teacher inquiry time equivalent to two hours' non-contact time per qualified teacher per week, to support continuing professional development activities

Early childhood teachers and kaiako need time to put into practice the better understanding of curriculum and pedagogy they gain from programmes and the online clearinghouse. This time is best provided as paid release. It allows individual and collaborative inquiry, researching and engaging with local knowledge, and reviewing the effects of changes in curriculum implementation.

Time for this kind of activity is unevenly distributed across the sector. Many early childhood education and care services already allow time for developmental activities according to local needs, induction and mentoring activities, professional meetings, collaboration with families and whānau, and individual and group professional development activities. However, we believe all services should be expected to provide inquiry time for qualified staff.

They should also be expected to account in their audit returns to the Ministry of Education, and in self- and external review processes, for how this time is used. This will show that services are directly investing in building teacher and service capacity.

Recommendation 10

All early childhood education and care services make available teacher inquiry time equivalent to two hours' non-contact time per provisionally registered teacher per week, to support inquiry-based induction and mentoring

Investment in paid inquiry time is particularly critical for provisionally registered teachers (PRTs). There is overwhelming international evidence that losing momentum in developing practice affects many newly-graduated teachers, including those in this country's early childhood education and care services.²⁰ Loss of momentum in the early career stage undermines the government's major investment in initial teacher education and exacerbates problems of teacher retention. It is a significant cost to the community.²¹

Provisionally registered teachers need time to systematically reflect on practice and assessment of progress in meeting the registered teacher criteria.²² Where possible, inquiry time specifically for induction and mentoring activities (Recommendation 10) should be additional to that available to PRTs as qualified staff under Recommendation 9.

²⁰ Mahmood, S. (2013). "Reality shock": new early childhood education teachers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 34(2), 154-170.

²¹ Buchanan, J., Prescott, A., Schuck, S., Aubusson, P., Burke, P., and Louviere, J. (2013). Teacher retention and attrition: views of early career teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(3), 112-129.

²² New Zealand Teachers Council Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa. (2009). *Registered teacher criteria*. Wellington: Author.

Recommendations 11 and 12

Recommendation 11

A description of the links between the updated *Te Whāriki* and the ‘Key Competencies’ and Te Tino Uaratanga o Te Aho Mahua be added to *Te Whāriki*, the *New Zealand Curriculum*, *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* and *Te Aho Matua*

This recommendation indicates a major concern about the relationship between these curriculum frameworks and the implications for practice, which was raised in submissions. Expert advice made it clear that a downward ‘push’ in assessment practices into the first year of school in response to National Standards is having an undesirable effect on teaching practices. This, in turn, is affecting children’s experience of their first year of school.

Recommendations 11 and 12 therefore relate to strengthening teacher and family understandings of the learning links between early childhood education and schools, and teacher understandings of background frameworks used for assessment and reporting purposes.

We see a particularly helpful connection between *Te Whāriki*’s Strands and Goals, and the Key Competencies in the *New Zealand Curriculum* and Te Tino Uaratanga o Te Aho Matua in *Te Aho Matua*. Adding a description of links between key documents will make these links clearer to teachers, families and whānau.

Recommendation 12

These links be published on a poster to be distributed to all puna, kura, kōhanga reo, schools and early childhood education and care services

Providing early childhood services, kōhanga reo, schools and kura with a large, attractive poster will make it a resource for professional development and for discussions with families and whānau about their child’s transition between early childhood and school settings. We see the poster as an effective way of strengthening relationships and communication about progress and next learning steps.

Recommendation 13

The New Zealand government amend the law to allow primary schools to enrol five-year-olds by cohort, or individually, or both

Current law requires schools to accept children from their fifth birthdays. This perpetuates a unique cultural practice: allowing children to begin school one by one, on any day of the school year. Internationally, children more commonly start in cohorts at the beginning of each school year or term, and over a range of ages from four to six. Some New Zealand schools are already moving toward cohort-based starts, while still complying with the law to accept children from their fifth birthday, if that is what a child's parents or guardian want.

Our recommendation would not take away this legal requirement; rather, it would allow schools to consult with their communities on whether to retain or change current practice, or develop a combination of the two.

School entry in a cohort is reported to be valuable in helping children build relationships, as opposed to having to enter an already established classroom. The *Transition to School Position Statement*,²³ developed by education experts, suggests group entry offers an opportunity for communities to come together to celebrate, demonstrate the value of education, and build partnerships connecting children, families, teachers and community. A cohort system also lets teachers plan a programme focused on the new group, which having children starting school on any day in the year does not.

It is recognised that, whether children start school individually or in a cohort, successful transition from early childhood education and care influences their later social and educational outcomes for the better.²⁴ However, we also caution that the impacts school-starting arrangements have on social and educational outcomes for children and families do vary. The Early Childhood Education Taskforce²⁵ noted changing patterns of workforce participation in Aotearoa New Zealand, and these influence where and when children attend early childhood education services and school.

This is why we do not advocate mandatory cohort entry. Instead, an amendment to current legislation would allow local schools, early childhood services and communities to take responsibility for identifying what is needed, reflecting on their transition to school policies and practices as a whole, and considering any consequences for funding and other impacts on the welfare of families and whānau.

²³ Educational Transitions and Change (ETC) Research Group. (2011). *Transition to school: Position statement*. Albury-Wodonga, Australia: Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education, Charles Sturt University.

²⁴ Fabian, H., and Dunlop, A.-W. (2007). *Outcomes of good practices in transition process for children entering primary school* (Working Paper 42). The Hague, The Netherlands: Bernard van Leer Foundation.

²⁵ Ministry of Education (2011). *An agenda for amazing children: Final report of the ECE taskforce*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Recommendation 14

Primary schools consider establishing reception classes for five-year-olds, with curriculum planning, assessment and evaluation based on *Te Whāriki*

Under the *New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, New Zealand schools already have the flexibility to design a curriculum based on local needs and schools can use *Te Whāriki* with children up to six years old. Another benefit of moving to cohort-based school entry is that it would allow schools to systematically establish 'reception' or 'transition' classes. In settings where, for example, Pasifika early childhood education services have strong connections with local schools, a Pasifika teacher or allied staff member (see Recommendation 19) should be employed to continue language learning into primary school, supported by appropriate literacy materials.

In making Recommendations 13 and 14, the Advisory Group is adamant that any downward 'push' on the school-starting age or from school curriculum frameworks is undesirable. New Zealand children are already in one of the youngest international age brackets for starting school.²⁶ Tensions remain between the approaches *Te Whāriki* and the *New Zealand Curriculum* advocate to learning, but policy frameworks have consistently recognised that a play-based curriculum offers the best learning experiences for the early years.

This is why we believe primary schools should consider using *Te Whāriki*, rather than the *New Zealand Curriculum*, as a framework for planning, assessing and evaluating in the first year of school. This advice is particularly relevant for children who have had no formal early childhood education before coming to school, and so may not have developed the knowledge and dispositions needed for a smooth transition.

²⁶ Peters, S. (2010). *Literature review: Transition from early childhood to school*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Recommendation 15

The clearinghouse created by Recommendation 8 be a repository for case studies of effective transition to school policies and practices

A repository of effective transition to school practices will ensure models are available for all when developing their own policies and procedures (see Recommendation 16).

The Advisory Group sees the following example as one potential source of case studies of effective transition to school policies and practices.

Throughout 2015, the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa have been working together to develop flexible models for raising achievement in every student's educational pathway – from early childhood to tertiary education.

Examples of successful practice are a source of advice and inspiration for local initiatives, ensuring:

- models become known beyond the local early childhood services and schools that implement them
- evidence that such models are inevitably diverse and customised to local needs and practices; there is no one 'best' way of supporting good transition to school.

Recommendation 16

The Ministry of Education require all schools and early childhood services to develop, implement and evaluate transition to school policies, in consultation with local stakeholders

Our online consultation asked schools and early childhood services about their transition to school policies and practices. Responses indicated a range of these are in effect, and that in many cases they are not systematically evaluated. Recommendations 15 and 16 respond to this finding.

Effective transition to school policies will foster development of local assessment and reporting tools to meet the requirements of early childhood services, schools, kura, families and whānau. By combining these tools with *Te Whāriki* for use with children up to six years old, schools can develop sound strategies for reporting children's transition progress to parents, families and whānau by the time the children are five and a half.

Recommendation 17

The Ministry of Education update arrangements for children with special educational needs and urgently resolve funding issues to support children with special needs and their families as they transition to school

We were aware from the outset of our work that Group Special Education is updating across-the-sector arrangements for supporting students with special education needs. Recommendation 17, therefore, focuses on continuity of learning, as covered by our Terms of Reference, and particularly transition to school. We intend the commentary here to inform and complement the parallel Group Special Education update.

*Transition to School: Guidelines for Early Intervention Providers*²⁷ recommends key elements for transition of students with special education needs. It is based on a process that ‘involves a combination of activities, attitudes, effective relationships and communication’.²⁸ Discussing recommendations to support these guidelines in relation to our terms of reference was a major focus for the group.

Early in our discussions, we were alerted to the urgent need for resolving the complex funding issues that come into play for families of children with special education needs who are transitioning to school. Funding the extra interventions and support these children need is one of the key challenges faced by early childhood services, schools and families. If, for example, a family chooses to wait until their child is six before enrolling them in school, funding for extra interventions – for example, Ministry of Education Early Intervention Special Education team input – will have already ceased. This can put more stress on the child, their family and the teaching team at their early childhood service. It can also reduce the benefits of the extra time the family decided to give their child in the early childhood setting.

Many children with special education needs also benefit from a longer, more flexible transition programme, with multiple visits between early childhood service and school. These visits give education providers the opportunity to see a child in current and future settings, and to respond to extra needs as they arise. Extended transition also gives a child time to adjust to changes in routine, and to form relationships with key people in their new support team. However, this flexible transition relies on funding to release early childhood teachers so they can visit the school with the child, and so they have time for meetings with family and whānau, and the child’s specialist staff (for example, speech-language therapists from Early Intervention Special Education and School Focus).

Children with Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) funding may be funded for extra hours of support as soon as they start school. But for children who have complex and challenging needs but are not entitled to ORS funding, the school they enrol in has to use their Special Education Grant money to cover the extra costs of transition. This grant is not based on the number of children with special needs in the school, but on decile and total school population. So it can be challenging to cover these extra costs in schools that have more children with special education needs. This results in inequitable funding, and extra pressure on those schools striving to implement inclusive practices for all children.

²⁷Ministry of Education. (2014). *Transition to School Guidelines for Early Intervention Providers*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/SpecialEducation/PublicationsResources/TransitionToSchoolGuidelines.pdf>

²⁸ Ibid, p8.

For many early childhood services and schools, access to extra Ministry of Education support for students with special needs is also hampered by long waiting lists for specialist services (for example, speech-language and occupational therapists). Waiting times of up to three terms after a child has started school are not unusual. This means schools must rely on information provided by the Early Intervention Special Education team before the child started school. Thus, teachers of students with special education needs who have started school without Early Intervention Special Education support are trying to provide differentiated and supportive programmes without any specialist input on which to base informed decisions.

A second area of concern for the group is the need for an *overall* funding increase for intervention for children with special educational needs. An instance of this need, as well as the need for better-coordinated funding arrangements across the sector, is the case of children with conduct problems. The Advisory Group on Conduct Problems (AGCP) to the New Zealand Ministry of Social Development²⁹ recommended that children from three to seven should be the priority in developing policy on conduct problems. Their two reasons for focusing on this age range were, first, that evidence for effective interventions is strongest for this age group; and, second, that considerable evidence shows early intervention is likely to have greater long-term benefits and be more cost-effective than later intervention.

It was evident to us, despite this AGCP recommendation, that transition to school practices for children with conduct problems are inconsistent across the country. In some cases, Early Intervention Special Education teams are operating in isolation from School Behaviour Special Education teams, resulting in a less-than-seamless pathway for these children. Early identification of children with conduct problems is essential and requires a system-wide approach to effective transitions.³⁰ Appropriate interventions are an opportunity to promote positive behaviours before these become resistant to change. Interventions that fail to follow children consistently along their education pathway in the early years put these children at greater risk of consolidating their anti-social behaviour. Implementing non-evidence-based behaviour packages has already resulted in lost investment in the system.³¹

The AGCP did identify intervention programmes likely to be effective and acceptable. Some are being widely used across early years settings. But it is evident to us that further investigation is needed into how interventions are operating across settings and whether they are resulting in a seamless pathway for children. Some analysis, for example, is needed on how the Incredible Years programme, which is widely used in the early childhood education and care sector, relates to the Positive Behaviour for Learning programme widely used in schools.

We are convinced that resolving existing funding issues will result in a more flexible, responsive transition between early childhood services and schools for students with special education needs, their families and whānau.

²⁹ Blissett, W., Church, J., Fergusson, D. M., Lambie, J., Langley, J., Liberty, K., et al. (2009). *Conduct problems best practice report*. Wellington: Ministry of Social Development.

³⁰ Sanders, M. R., Ralph, A., Sofronoff, K., Gardiner, P., Thompson, R., Dwyer, S., et al. (2008). Every family: A population approach to reducing behavioral and emotional problems in children making the transition to school. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 29(3), 197-222.

³¹ Savage, C.N, Lewis, J, Colless, N. (2011). Essentials for implementation: Six years of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 40(1), 29-37.

Recommendations 18 and 19

Recommendation 18

The TeachNZ Scholarship Programme be extended to target recruitment and preparation of Māori and Pasifika teacher education graduates into post-graduate programmes focused on special educational needs

The Advisory Group recognises and endorses the work of TeachNZ and its scholarship programme for Māori and Pasifika teachers and teacher education candidates. Its effective strategy and infrastructure provides a respected, established means of targeting teacher recruitment and post-graduate development in areas of expertise that are highly valued and subject to severe shortage.

We recognise that families who feel vulnerable and insecure when their child transitions to school need to work with someone who understands their culture and values. This is especially true for families whose home language is not English and whose child has special educational needs. In Auckland, the world's largest Pasifika city, there are no Pasifika special education teachers. Yet families whose children have special educational needs require support from qualified teachers with the knowledge and skills to support these children, particularly in the transition from early childhood education and care to primary school.

The Pasifika Education Plan 2013–2017

This plan looks to increase the presence, participation and achievement of Pasifika learners with special education needs. It aims to intervene for positive results in their learning, and accelerate implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning and Incredible Years teacher initiatives.

Its goals are to:

- 'Increase the knowledge, confidence and skills of staff delivering specialist education services to Pasifika and provide cultural supervision and training for specialist education service delivery staff.'³² These staff play a key role in giving parents, families and communities information that raises awareness of Early Intervention Special Education services, builds trust and confidence, and deepens understanding of special education services.
- 'Encourage families with children with special needs to be involved in both ECE and Primary School education.'³³ Targets allied to this goal include increasing the percentage of Pasifika learners with special education needs aged from birth to five years who access early intervention services from 2012's nine percent to 13 percent in 2016. Another target is reducing the average age at which Pasifika learners start accessing Early Intervention Special Education services.
- '80 percent of schools demonstrate fully inclusive practices by 2014 and the remaining 20 percent of schools demonstrate some inclusive practices by 2014. This will see every Pasifika child with special education needs welcomed, participating, enjoying and achieving at any New Zealand school.'³⁴

³² Ministry of Education. (2012). *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017*. Wellington: Ministry of Education, p14.

³³ Ibid, p6.

³⁴ Ibid, p8.

Our recommendation is consistent with the New Zealand government's *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017*. This identifies desired outcomes for Pasifika learners with special educational needs, but does not provide for targeted, specialised help in the form of teaching scholarships.

The Advisory Group is aware of the continuing need for more Māori and Pasifika teacher education graduates, particularly those prepared to specialise in special educational needs teaching, which demands an aptitude and inclination for working in this area as well as specialist skills. Cultural values and understanding are crucial, but so is an ability to work in special needs education's wide-ranging areas. Teacher education providers and/or future employers can encourage Māori and Pasifika students who show this inclination and skill to continue their studies. The TeachNZ scholarship will be an incentive for those wanting to pursue graduate studies.

Recommendation 19

The schools sector develop policies and practices for recruiting allied staff fluent in te reo Māori and Pasifika languages, and with specialised cultural knowledge, to help children transition to school via their own language pathways

Our Terms of Reference speak to the urgent need to ensure children who speak Māori or a Pasifika language as their first language can maintain and develop it through the transition to school and beyond. Ideally, such children can make several seamless transitions involving their extended family (for example, from kōhanga reo, to kura, to wharekura and beyond). However, this is not the case for many.

We propose two strategies to support language retention across the transition to school:

1. We see the potential for systematically targeting graduates of relevant language courses at Levels 5 and 6 of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework for pre-service teacher education at Levels 7 and 8. Level 7 achievement would prepare graduates to work in schools as allied staff, and for pathways to Level 8 qualifications and beyond.
2. Schools should recruit, as allied staff, speakers from their community fluent in children's home language(s). They would support children and families across the transition to school. These staff may not have formal teaching qualifications but would have rich knowledge of cultural practices and home language(s) to support language retention and extension in the first years of school. Staff with strong connections to Pacific knowledge or tikanga and te reo Māori working successfully in this role should then be considered for pre-service and post-graduate scholarships, including financial incentives to further their studies. This will grow the pool of Māori and Pasifika teachers with strong links to communities and traditional practice, thus reinforcing the value of cultural and linguistic knowledge.

Recommendation 20

The Ministry of Education commission a data linking project, connecting information generated by the *Growing up in New Zealand* study with Education Review Office reports on early years services attended by children taking part in the study

The Advisory Group is eager to ensure that opportunities can be capitalised to link existing large data sets on characteristics and outcomes of children, families and early years settings.

One area for immediate investigation is the link between children's characteristics at school entry and the characteristics of services attend by those children, as identified in Education Review office reports. The *Growing Up in New Zealand* study can link children to the early childhood services they attended, so it may be possible to identify relationships (if there are any) between aspects of these children's early childhood education and their achievement in the early years of school.

Implementation plan

Our recommendations	Achievable in the short term (1-2 years)	Achievable in the medium term (2-5 years)	Achievable in the long term (3 years or more)
1. That the Ministry of Education seed fund between \$500 and \$1,000 per site to establish up to 200 early-learning clusters across Aotearoa New Zealand, to pool the knowledge and resources of teachers, whānau and communities			
2. That the Ministry of Education commission an update of <i>Te Whāriki</i>			
3. That the Ministry of Education commission the digitisation of <i>Te Whāriki</i>			
4. That the Ministry of Education call for tenders for a major professional development initiative (2016-2020 inclusive) focused on leadership for learning in early childhood education and care settings (birth to five years), and emphasising leadership of <i>Te Whāriki</i> implementation for all learners, and Māori perspectives and leadership for bicultural practice			
5. That the initiative take the form of an intervention-based, integrated research and development programme that allows for simultaneous professional development and tracking of affordances, barriers and outcomes related to implementing <i>Te Whāriki</i>			
6. That the initiative have as a major output a series of modular, web-based professional development resources designed to foster and enhance leadership-for-learning practices in early childhood education and care services, and suitable for leaders to use independently when implementing <i>Te Whāriki</i> as bicultural practice			
7. That the Ministry of Education redirect current early childhood education professional development funding to a programme of sustained professional development in early years settings (birth to eight years) focused on implementing the updated <i>Te Whāriki</i> and practice grounded in kaupapa Māori theory			
8. That the early childhood sector collaborate to commission development and ongoing resourcing of a comprehensive, web-based clearinghouse to inform teaching, learning and professional development in early years education, emphasising kaupapa Māori pedagogical approaches			
9. That all early childhood education and care services make available teacher inquiry time equivalent to two hours' non-contact time per qualified teacher per week, to support continuing professional development activities			
10. That all early childhood education and care services make available teacher inquiry time equivalent to two hours' non-contact time per provisionally registered teacher per week, to support inquiry-based induction and mentoring			

Our recommendations	Achievable in the short term	Achievable in the medium term	Achievable in the long term
	(1-2 years)	(2-5 years)	(3 years or more)
11. That a description of the links between the updated <i>Te Whāriki</i> and the 'Key Competencies' and Te Tino Uaratanga o Te Aho Matua be added to <i>Te Whāriki</i> , the <i>New Zealand Curriculum</i> , <i>Te Marautanga o Aotearoa</i> and <i>Te Aho Matua</i>			
12. That these links be published on a poster and distributed to all puna, kura, kōhanga reo, schools and early childhood education and care services			
13. That the New Zealand Government amend the law to allow primary schools to enrol five-year-olds by cohort, or individually, or both			
14. That primary schools consider establishing reception classes for five-year-olds, with curriculum planning, assessment and evaluation based on <i>Te Whāriki</i>			
15. That the clearinghouse created by Recommendation 8 be a repository for case studies of effective transition to school policies and practices			
16. That the Ministry of Education require all schools and early childhood services to develop, implement and evaluate transition to school policies, in consultation with local stakeholders			
17. That the Ministry of Education update arrangements to support children with special educational needs, and urgently resolve funding issues to support children with special needs and their families as they transition to school			
18. That the TeachNZ scholarship programme be extended to target recruitment and preparation of Māori and Pasifika teacher education graduates into post-graduate programmes focused on special educational needs			
19. That the schools sector develop policies and practices for recruiting allied staff fluent in te reo Māori and Pasifika languages, and with specialised cultural knowledge, to help children transition to school via their own language pathways			
20. That the Ministry of Education commission a data-linking project, connecting information generated by the <i>Growing Up in New Zealand</i> study with Education Review Office reports on early years services attended by children taking part in the study.			

Appendix A: Terms of Reference for the Advisory Group on Early Learning

Remit

There is good evidence to show that high quality early learning can make a valuable contribution to every child's educational achievement. *Te Whāriki*, the New Zealand early childhood curriculum framework, provides a sound foundation to support quality teaching and learning for young children. There is, however, wide variation in how well *Te Whāriki* is implemented by early childhood education (ECE) services and how the foundation it provides is carried on into the early years of schooling.

[The Education Review Office \(ERO\) report on the implementation of Te Whāriki \(May 2013\)](#) highlighted the need for ECE services to look at "... their implementation of the curriculum, to review its effectiveness and find ways of working in-depth with Te Whāriki to achieve the best outcomes for children at their service". ERO found considerable variation in the understanding of *Te Whāriki* and teacher practices, with most services not using the curriculum framework in depth to reflect on, evaluate or improve practice.

OECD's country report, [Quality Matters in Early childhood education and Care: New Zealand 2012](#) suggests that New Zealand could capitalise on the strengths of its ECE system by looking at options for improving the implementation of *Te Whāriki*. This could include strengthening parental involvement in curriculum design and implementation.

We know that children's development is enhanced if they experience consistent teaching and learning that is responsive to their needs. There is some evidence that students who have fallen behind their peers in the initial years of schooling tend to stay behind. The Continuity of Early Learning (CoEL) work stream of the Ministerial Cross-Sector Forum on Raising Student Achievement was established to consider ways to ensure that every child is a competent and confident learner by age 8 years, participating in a wide range of experiences across the curriculum frameworks.

In 2013-14 the CoEL work stream commissioned two projects focused on raising the achievement of priority learners³⁵. These projects highlighted challenges relating to cross-sector (ECE and school) understanding of curriculum frameworks and assessment practices. They identified services' implementation of curriculum frameworks as a key area to focus on as well as connecting teaching practice across early learning services, and school and kura settings for children aged 0-8 years.

Objectives

An Advisory Group on Early Learning (Advisory Group) is being convened to provide advice to the Minister of Education on:

- how to strengthen the implementation of *Te Whāriki*; and
- practical ways to align curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation across early learning services and the early years of school and kura.

³⁵ Continuity of Early Learning: Learning progress and outcomes in the early years – a literature scan (to be released soon); and ECE leadership for 5 out of 5 – a video and professional development workshop.

The main focus is on:

- identifying the key *Te Whāriki* implementation issues that need to be addressed;
- strengthening relationships and communication about progress and next learning steps with children, families and whānau, particularly at key transition points;
- identifying the support required to improve teaching practice in early learning including the need for teachers and leaders to understand the language, culture, and identity of all learners;
- examining practical ways to align curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation across ECE, kōhanga reo/puna reo and the early years of school and kura; and
- developing a plan for improving the implementation of *Te Whāriki* and aligning teaching practice across early learning services and the early years of school and kura.

Membership

The membership of the Advisory Group will contain a mix of relevant experience and expertise. The group as a whole should include demonstrated knowledge and understanding of:

- early learning and development across 0-8 years;
- the early learning and schooling sectors in New Zealand, in particular deep knowledge of *Te Whāriki*, *The New Zealand Curriculum* and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa* (the curriculum frameworks for early learning, school, and Māori medium schooling, respectively);
- the planning, development, implementation, monitoring and review of curriculum frameworks;
- improving teaching practice and practitioner skill sets, including models of change, evaluation of impact, and use of assessment information;
- the design and delivery of system-level interventions;
- teaching and learning resources;
- kaupapa Māori and fluency in te reo Māori (relevant to curriculum implementation in language immersion settings);
- Pasifika cultures and languages and expertise in networking with Pasifika communities;
- children with special education needs; and
- effective and timely relationships and communications with parents, families, and whānau.

Members will be chosen for their individual skills and expertise, not as representatives of their organisations.

Membership will consist of no fewer than six and no more than ten members.

Selection criteria and process

Nominations or applications for membership of the Advisory Group will be considered under these criteria:

- relevant experience and areas of expertise;
- understanding of opportunities and challenges in supporting quality curriculum design and implementation;
- appropriate level of cultural responsiveness and understanding of the importance of identity, language and culture in supporting children's learning;
- knowledge of ECE or kōhanga reo/puna reo and/or school and kura sectors in New Zealand and the environment within which they operate, including the Government's responsibilities under *Tiriti o Waitangi*;
- knowledge of evidence relating to development, learning and effective teaching practice for children aged 0-8 years;
- ability to provide objective, evidence-based system-wide advice beyond their own involvement, experience or representation; and
- being available and able to commit to the whole process.

Role and scope

In scope:

Exploring effective practice in strengthening and aligning the implementation of *Te Whāriki* and the school curriculum frameworks, and developing a plan to support continuity of early learning for children aged 0-8 years by:

- publishing key questions inviting responses from ECE, kōhanga reo/puna reo, school and kura sectors;
- using targeted consultation and available evidence, including New Zealand and international experts, to identify the key curriculum implementation issues that need to be addressed and the effectiveness of current interventions;
- identifying the information, support and resources required to further strengthen curriculum implementation in ECE and kōhanga reo/puna reo and in the early years of school and kura;
- identifying ways to strengthen whānau and families' knowledge and understanding of *Te Whāriki* and how it aligns with the school curriculum frameworks;
- identifying ways to strengthen the connection and retention of children within education pathways, including the connection and retention from kōhanga reo/puna reo to kura;
- examining practical ways to align curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation, and to articulate learning outcomes, across ECE and kōhanga reo/puna reo and in the early years of school and kura;
- identifying any system obstacles to continuity of early learning, for example within the legislative, regulatory and funding regimes for ECE and kōhanga reo/puna reo and in the early years of school and kura; and

- providing advice on a plan with workable solutions, and particular priorities, that are culturally responsive and inclusive of all children, families and whānau, that the Government could take out for public consultation if significant changes are recommended.

The Advisory Group should have due regard to:

- the constrained fiscal environment under which the government operates;
- the opportunities and risks of any proposals;
- alignment with other Ministry of Education priorities, initiatives and programmes;
- the focus on whole learning pathways, transitions and collaborative practice that underpin the Communities of Schools and the Investing in Educational Success initiative;
- the recent reviews of regulations and of professional learning and development; and
- the recommendations of the ECE Taskforce, in particular in Essay 6 '*Enhancing ECE through Te Whāriki*'.

Out of scope:

Rewriting Te Whāriki, The New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa.

Meetings and process

The Minister will appoint members, including the chair.

The Ministry of Education will convene and provide secretariat support for meetings of the Advisory Group.

Responsibility of members

Members must:

- act in the best interests of all stakeholders, including children and parents;
- endeavour to provide objective, evidence-based advice; and
- dedicate sufficient time to make a meaningful contribution to the progress of the Advisory Group from December to late June 2015. It is expected that there will be six meetings with the introductory meeting occurring in December, early in the second week of February, March, April, May and June. There may also be video conference meetings in between meetings.

Views of members will not be taken as those of their employers, or their organisations.

Conflict of interest

Advisory Group members should perform their tasks honestly, impartially and in good faith. Members should also avoid situations that might compromise their integrity or otherwise lead to conflicts of interest.

If a member becomes aware of a conflict of interest, they will advise the Ministry of Education.

Payment

Eligible members will be entitled to a daily meeting fee to be paid in accordance with Cabinet Office Fees Guidelines [CO (12) 6 refers]. Members will be reimbursed for actual and reasonable travel and accommodation costs.

Reporting

The Advisory Group will report to the Group Manager, ECE in the Ministry of Education, and provide their final report to the Minister of Education.

Term

The Advisory Group's advice should be delivered to the Minister of Education by 30 June 2015.

Confidentiality

Advice provided by the Advisory Group to officials will be treated in confidence.

Members will not disclose information provided to them in confidence by officials.

Members will not make media statements about the work of the Advisory Group unless agreed by the Ministry of Education.

Official Information Act 1982

The Official Information Act 1982 will apply without exception to the activities of the Advisory Group. The Ministry will be responsible for ensuring that members are aware of the provisions of the Act, and the extent to which written material is discoverable under it.

Appendix B: Advisory Group on Early Learning process

Education Minister Hekia Parata established the Advisory Group on Early Learning on 10 December 2014.

Members are:

- Associate Professor Joce Nuttall (chairperson)
- Dame Dr Iritana Tawhiwhirangi
- Adelle Broadmore
- Jeanette Clarkin-Phillips
- Ali Glasgow
- Carol Hartley
- Dr Lesley Rameka
- Brenda Soutar
- Jan Taouma
- Jan Tinetti

Ministry of Education officials provided secretariat support.

The group's preliminary meeting was held in December 2014. It then met monthly from February to May 2015, with teleconferences as needed. Meeting dates were:

- 16 December 2014
- 3-4 February 2015
- 17 February (teleconference)
- 24 March
- 21-22 April
- 12 May (teleconference)
- 26-27 May
- 16 June (teleconference)

The Education Minister addressed the Advisory Group on 4 February 2015, and met with the chairperson on 27 May for an update on its work.

Between Friday 13 March and Tuesday 7 April the Ministry secretariat conducted on the group's behalf an online consultation in te reo Māori and English. The consultation targeted ECE and school practitioners, ITE and PD providers, and education sector representative organisations.

The Ministry secretariat also commissioned on the group's behalf a literature review of the evidence for *Te Whāriki* effective implementation, and a synopsis of findings.

Appendix C: Individuals and organisations consulted during face-to-face consultation

Name	Role	Date
Nancy Bell, Peter Reynolds and Clare Wells	Representatives of the Continuity of Early Learning Workstream of the Ministerial Cross-sector Forum on Raising Achievement	3 February 2015
Rawiri Brell	Deputy Secretary, Early Learning, Parents and Whānau, Ministry of Education	3 February 2015
Graham Stoop	Deputy Secretary, Education System Performance, Ministry of Education	3 February 2015
Hon Hekia Parata	Minister of Education	4 February 2015
Margaret Carr and Helen May	Leaders in the development of <i>Te Whāriki</i>	24 March 2015
Anne Meade and Carmen Dall	Representatives of the ECE Policy Research Forum	24 March 2015
Stuart McNaughton	Chief Scientific Advisor, Ministry of Education	24 March 2015
Jacky Burgon, Julie Hook and Julie Houghton	Special Education, Ministry of Education	24 March 2015
Lady Tilly and Sir Tamati Reedy	Leaders in the development of <i>Te Whāriki</i>	21 April 2015
Sandra Collins and Lynda Pura-Watson	Education Review Office	21 April 2015

Appendix D: Summary of online consultation responses

Overview

The online consultation undertaken on behalf of the Advisory Group on Early Learning sought information on three key areas of current practice:

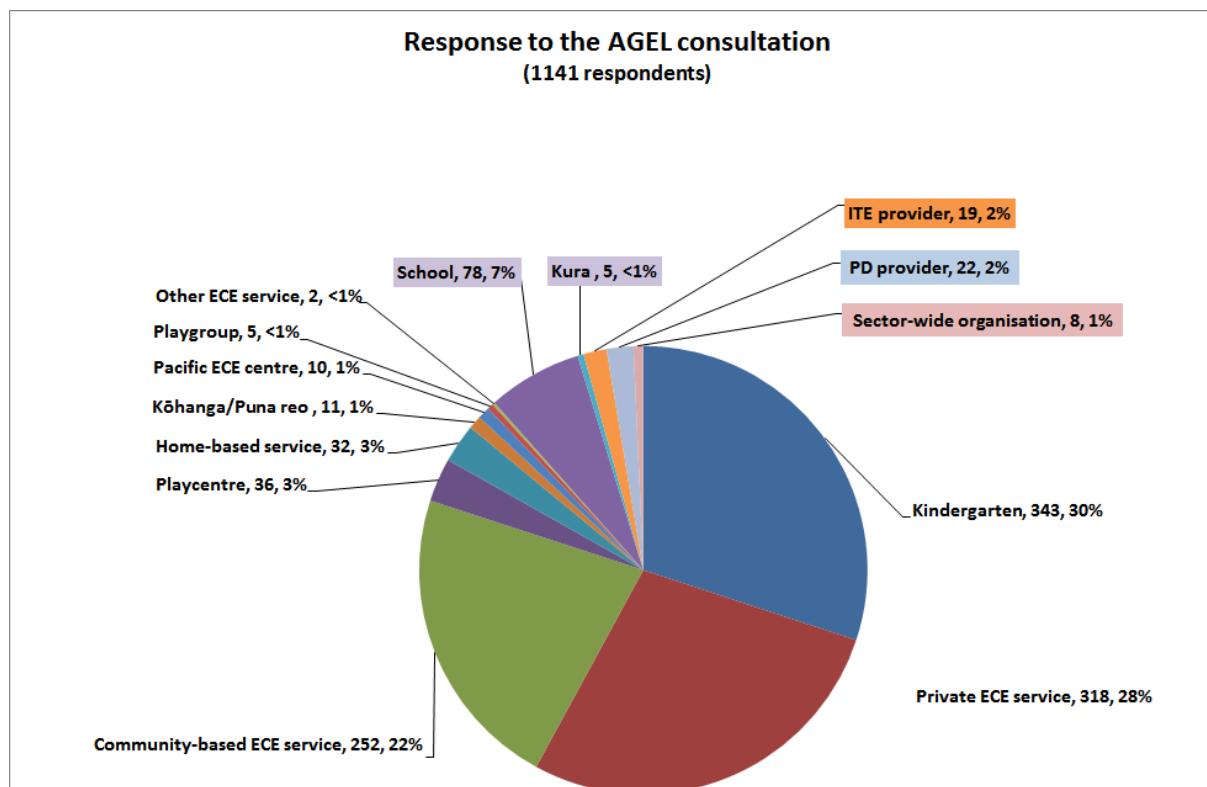
- transition to school
- links between early childhood and school curriculum frameworks
- *Te Whāriki* implementation.

The Advisory Group designed the questions and advised the sector of the opportunity to respond via a SurveyMonkey link. Respondents were asked four sets of questions relating to:

- early childhood education (ECE) services, schools or kura (19 open-ended and fixed-response)
- initial teacher education (ITE) providers (six open-ended)
- professional development (PD) providers (six open-ended)
- sector-wide organisations (five open-ended).

We received 1,141 valid responses. Five came by email and were entered manually into SurveyMonkey. Two were in Te Reo.

Figure 1: Overview of response by type of respondent and type of service or school



Of the total 1,092 responses from ECE services and schools, about three-quarters were from individual educators, and 18 percent from early childhood centre owners or managers. Five percent came from groups of educators, one percent from parents, and less than one percent responded on behalf of a school.

Consultation findings

Transition policies and programmes

Education services varied as to whether they had written policies, whether they reviewed these policies, and what kinds of transition programmes they had in place.

Most education services had a written transition policy, which they reviewed at least annually; some, however, did not. Compared with ECE services alone, a much smaller proportion of schools and kura had written transition policies and/or reviewed these regularly. Respondents were too few to allow us to confirm trends, but differences in practice may vary by type of ECE service or location.

Most education services' transition programmes involved families, whānau and/or schools, kura or ECE services, and/or sought input from children, families and whānau in designing and implementing transition activities.

Smaller proportions of education services had transition programmes catering specifically for children from diverse social backgrounds or those with special education needs.

Suggested ways of improving transition practices included:

- funding to cover release time for visits to ECE services or schools
- funding for PD on transition, provided jointly for ECE and schools
- improving teacher/child ratios
- improving schools' understanding and respect for the role of ECE and *Te Whāriki*, as well as improving schools' uptake of information prepared by ECE services on children's learning
- improving ECE services' understanding of school readiness
- Ministry of Education provision of guidance materials on achieving a consistent approach to transition across the sector.

Learning continuity and links between curriculum frameworks

Most ITE and PD providers considered their programmes adequately met the need for learning continuity and links between curriculum frameworks. They suggested that providing more, ongoing PD would result in better continuity of learning, as would ensuring all ECE teachers were qualified. Qualified teachers, they said, were more likely to be educated in both curriculum frameworks.

Respondents identified these barriers to learning continuity:

- schools or kura being unfamiliar with *Te Whāriki* and the educational focus of ECE services and/or being unreceptive to the learning records developed in ECE settings
- ECE services being unsure how best to prepare children for school
- children who have not attended an ECE service

- lack of a simple one-to-one relationship between ECE services and schools or kura; this occurs where children from one ECE go to several schools or kura, or where schools receive children from many ECE services, or where a school or kura and the ECE service are geographically separated.

Implementation of Te Whāriki

Some parts of *Te Whāriki*, such as 'Strands' and 'Goals', were used more often than others, such as 'Links to the New Zealand Curriculum' and 'Questions for Reflection'.

Some aspects of practice, such as assessment and planning, more often made use of *Te Whāriki* than others, such as transition to school activities.

Confidence in *Te Whāriki* use varied across practice areas. More respondents rated their use of *Te Whāriki* in planning for the needs of children, planning experiences for children and assessment as strong or very strong, than they did when implementing planning and evaluation of practice.

Comments suggested that some ECE service respondents:

- thought *Te Whāriki* was applied most rigorously when documenting children's learning, such as in learning stories or portfolios
- would have liked more non-contact time so they could fully implement *Te Whāriki*
- thought all ECE teachers should be qualified
- would have liked ongoing or refresher PD on *Te Whāriki*
- thought PD would work best delivered simultaneously to all staff in a service, which would result in shared understanding and motivation to implement the curriculum, with some suggesting joint PD with schools
- would have liked resources for helping parents or whānau understand *Te Whāriki*
- found the document too complex and/or would have liked more materials developed to help them with implementation; some suggested reissuing *Te Whāriki* DVD.

Most ITE and PD providers believed their programmes adequately covered *Te Whāriki* implementation. However, they suggested that education services would benefit from ongoing PD and release time to take part. Some respondents suggested *Te Whāriki* would be applied more consistently if all ECE service staff were fully qualified and/or centres had to be more accountable.

Common themes arising from consultation

- Experience of school and kura failure to acknowledge children's learning in ECE settings was widespread, as was the need for joint PD or initial training to address this. Some, for example, suggested using cluster groups; others, that practicum placements based in the other setting should be part of initial training.
- Many noted the need for extra PD or mentoring, with funding for release and/or non-contact time to take part in PD and/or transition activities. Examples were visits by ECE teachers to schools and

vice versa, and/or to fully implement *Te Whāriki*, particularly questions for reflection and practice evaluation.

- Some mentioned gaps or delays in supporting children with special education needs when they moved from an ECE service to a school or kura. A smaller number of respondents had a transition programme for supporting these children.
- Some suggested the need to update *Te Whāriki* to provide links to the new school curriculum framework.
- Several respondents noted that privacy law-concerns prevented ECE services passing on information about a child to schools. Since it is up to parents or whānau to allow information to be passed on or to pass it on themselves, in some instances useful information failed to reach schools.
- Some early childhood educators wanted more information or guidance on preparing children for school, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Others disagreed, suggesting either continuation of a play-based approach into the school setting, and/or extending *Te Whāriki* use into the early school years.
- Some respondents wanted more resources to make the approach to transition more consistent, either within their own education service or across the whole sector. Many mentioned that the best way of achieving this was by returning to the goal of a 100 percent-qualified workforce.

Appendix E: Synopsis of evidence on the implementation of *Te Whāriki*

The Ministry of Education contracted Allen + Clarke to undertake a literature review and develop a synopsis of the empirical evidence for effective *Te Whāriki* implementation. The following material provides an overview of the findings.

Overview

Early childhood education (ECE) providers implement *Te Whāriki* using various practices and associated strategies. The literature reported overwhelmingly positive responses to the many strategies described. Almost all were characterised by:

- collaborative and iterative approaches to planning engagement and assessment
- identifying aspirations and expectations of parents, families/whānau
- multiple modes of communication with parents, families/whānau
- facilitating children's learning through the pursuit of their own interests.

The review gave rather less attention to literature on transition, but highlighted similar themes:

- the importance of communicating and engaging with parents and families/whānau, and between ECE providers and schools
- identifying aspirations and expectations of parents, families/whānau and children.

Education Review Office Evaluation

In 2013 the Education Review Office (ERO) conducted a national evaluation of ECE providers and published two key reports:

- *Working with Te Whāriki*
- *Priorities for Children's Learning in Early Childhood Services: Good Practice.*

ECE providers considered to demonstrate good practice:

- clearly identified education philosophy
- articulated service priorities well
- used iterative and consultative curriculum design and planning
- used frequent and diverse communications and engagement strategies with parents and families/whānau
- routinely linked learning, teaching and assessment practices to *Te Whāriki* objectives
- were committed to review and reflection.

Literature search

The search identified three key themes related to implementing *Te Whāriki*:

- review, critique and discussion of the curriculum and associated assessment processes
- focus on community, family and relationships
- examination of how domains of knowledge relate to and support implementation.

Review, critique and discussion of *Te Whāriki*

The available literature strongly emphasised critique and review, from discussions about the consultation and development process through to reflections on implementation, relevance and the need for review.

Examples of how *Te Whāriki* was implemented were:

- Research on Te Aroha Noa grass-roots service model. This model responded to needs articulated by parents, using a collaborative process based on an understanding that everyone is simultaneously a teacher and a learner.³⁶
- A discussion and analysis of learning stories as the main form of assessment³⁷ used to identify children's progress in developing a range of skills.³⁸
- An historical perspective on developing and introducing *Te Whāriki* that advocated gathering more evidence on implementation and associated outcomes.³⁹
- A discussion of teachers' perspectives on understanding, knowledge and practice of how *Te Whāriki* is, and should be, implemented.⁴⁰

Community, family and belonging

There is less research literature focused on *Te Whāriki* as a bicultural curriculum and specific practices to engage family and whānau in early childhood education. Examples were:

- A case study on a kaupapa Māori assessment framework in a bilingual preschool. This focused on supporting academic achievement in the New Zealand education system. It used discussion and reflection on what it meant to be Māori, and assessment language understandable by and appropriate for families and whānau.⁴¹
- A research report on ways of strengthening relationships with families and whānau, which emphasised providing a range of opportunities for teachers, children, parents and whānau to share/talk about learning experiences.⁴²

³⁶ Munford, R, Sanders, J, Maden, B, Maden, E. Blending whānau/family development parent support and early childhood education programmes. *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*. Issue 32. November 2007.

³⁷ Blaiklock, K. What are children learning in early childhood education in New Zealand? *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood* Vol. 38 No. 2, June 2013.

³⁸ Blaiklock, K. The Assessment of Children's language in early childhood centres. *New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies*, 45. 105-110 (2010)

³⁹ Nuttal, J. Looking back, looking forward: three decades of early childhood curriculum development in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Curriculum Matters* 2014

⁴⁰ Alvested, M, Duncan, J, Berge, A. New Zealand teachers talk about *Te Whāriki*. *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, Vo. 6. Issue 1. 3-19, 2009

⁴¹ Rameka, L. Kaupapa Māori assessment: A journey of meaning making. *Early Childhood Journal*. 13. 2009

⁴² Clarkin-Phillips, J, and Carr, M Strengthening responsive and reciprocal relationships in a whānau tangata centre: A Summary. *Early Childhood Folio*, Annual, 2009, Vol.13, p.12(4)

- A research report using a collaborative Western and Māori narrative approach to gather information on how ECE providers, in settings other than te kohanga reo, encourage Māori to participate and to meet their obligations to provide a bi-cultural curriculum.⁴³
- Qualitative research exploring communications strategies educators used to engage parents and whānau, including a portfolio/profile book with space for parent/whānau comments.⁴⁴
- A trial of e-portfolio platforms to support parent and whānau engagement and assessment.⁴⁵ This provided a quick and easy way to contribute, and parent feedback and contributions increased.

Domains of learning

When specifically looking at *Te Whāriki* implementation, the literature included research reports focusing on ECE activities. These were consistent with, or practised, the holistic approach to children's development that *Te Whāriki* promotes. Examples were:

- Outdoor learning behind and beyond the gate that explored 'place-responsive' child-initiated and child-led learning via discovery and experience.⁴⁶
- Unstructured outdoor play as a place for toddlers to develop mathematical skills, particularly in spatial awareness, counting, measuring and naming while playing with variously sized objects of different shapes, and problem solving.⁴⁷
- Work with teachers to undertake a qualitative review of how bilingual ECE educators used language with bilingual children. The review showed how practices helped implement *Te Whāriki*, using strategies for holistic development, stronger relationships, family and community engagement, and empowerment.⁴⁸

The literature also included discussion and analysis of 'working theories' in the ECE context and how these reflected and supported *Te Whāriki* implementation. They included:

- A qualitative research project discussing an ECE teacher's use of a learning-theories methodology framework as a more collaborative approach consistent with *Te Whāriki*. The Christchurch earthquake had just occurred, and the research looked at how children developed working theories for earthquakes, having been observed by their ECE teachers role-playing earthquake scenarios.⁴⁹
- Analysis of video and audio recordings of teachers during everyday interactions with children in an ECE setting, to understand how teachers' interests support teaching and learning episodes. Teacher strategies/actions included acknowledging and affirming the child's choice of activity, providing verbal support and advice, and using a combination of asking, pointing or gesturing and pausing to interact with a child with limited verbal communication skills.⁵⁰

⁴³ Ritchie, J, Rau, C. Whaka whānaungatanga – partnerships in bicultural development in early childhood care and education. Early Childhood Folio 10. 2006.

⁴⁴ Meade, A. Centre-parent communication about children's learning. Early Childhood Folio Vol 16. No. 2. 2012

⁴⁵ Penman, R. E-portfolios: Connecting parents, whanau and teachers in kindergarten communities. Early Education Spr/Sum 2014 No.56. p.10-13.

⁴⁶ Kelly, J & White E.J. The Ngahere Project: Teaching and learning possibilities in nature settings. 2013

⁴⁷ Lee, S. Toddlers as Mathematicians? Australian Journal of Early Childhood. Vol. 37, No.1, March 2012.

⁴⁸ Harvey, N. Principled practices: respect and reciprocity through a linguistically responsive pedagogy. Early childhood folio 17 (1): 19-23, 2013

⁴⁹ Hargraves, Vicki. Complex possibilities: 'working theories' as an outcome for the early childhood curriculum. Contemporary issues in early childhood 15 (4): 319-328, 2014

⁵⁰ Bateman, A, Bennett, T, Cairo, S, and MacMillan, N. Dispositional teaching in early childhood education. Early childhood folio 17 (1): 12-18, 2013

- A practitioner study using qualitative data-gathering techniques, including recordings, field notes and daily journals, and supported by thematic analysis, considered strategies that support development of children's working theories. Children's interests and activities included discussion and interest in small cuts and scrapes, visits to the doctor the children had experienced, and provision of a real stethoscope that generated interest in the heart and blood, particularly listening to a heartbeat.⁵¹

Transition to school

A few papers discussing the transition from ECE to school were reviewed. These focused on the debate about the extent to which ECE is and should be preparation for school entry. Empirical evidence focused on how parents' and children's expectations about school entry impacted on the transition, rather than did the success, or otherwise, of ECE methods in preparing children for school. The literature included:

- A critical analysis of the Ministry of Education website, which suggested ECE had been 'schoolified' – driven by economic imperatives that ran counter to the holistic development of children intended by *Te Whāriki*.⁵²
- A literature review and discussion of ECE and *Te Whāriki* in relation to the introduction of *National Standards*, and attendant pressure on educators to adopt more formal literacy and numeracy approaches, rather than responding to parental expectations.⁵³
- Action research in a teacher-training setting used the concepts of holistic and collaborative programme assessment, and design mirroring *Te Whāriki* as a basis for teaching students in a tertiary setting.⁵⁴
- Analysis of inconsistency in the readiness for school of children coming out of the ECE system, and discussion of competing views on levels of attainment they should have achieved at school entry and tensions with the *National Curriculum*. The paper discussed transition strategies, noting that most ECE providers focused on developing positive learning dispositions by noticing, recognising and responding to individual children's interests. Suggested strategies included more communication between schools and ECE providers, identifying expectations on learning milestones before school entry, and implementing gradual transition with multiple school visits.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Lovatt. D. How might teachers enrich children's working theories? Getting to the heart of the matter. *Early childhood folio* 18 (1): 28-34, 2014

⁵² Alcock. S, and Haggerty. M. Recent policy developments and the "schoolification" of early childhood care and education in Aotearoa New Zealand. *Early Childhood Folio* Vol 17 No 2: 2013

⁵³ A. Mortlock, N. Plowman, A. Glasgow. Transition to school: a principles approach. *New Zealand journal of teachers' work* (Online), 2011, Vol.8 (2), pp.94-103

⁵⁴ Stephenson. A. Troubling Teaching. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood*. Vol. 31. No. 1 March 2006.

⁵⁵ Barback. J. Building better bridges between ECE and school. *New Zealand education review*, Mar 2014; v.5 n.1:p.4-7

Bibliography for synopsis of evidence

- Blending whānau/family development parent support and early childhood education programmes. Munford. R, Sanders. J, Maden. B, Maden. E. Social Policy Journal of New Zealand. Issue 32. November 2007
- Building better bridges between ECE and school. Barback, Jude. New Zealand Education Review, Mar 2014; v.5 n.1: p.4-7
- Centre-parent communication about children's learning. Meade. A. Early Childhood Folio 16. No. 2. 2012
- Complex possibilities: 'working theories' as an outcome for the early childhood curriculum. Hargraves, Vicki. Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood 15 (4): 319-328, 2014
- Dispositional teaching in early childhood education. Bateman, Amanda; Bennett, Timothy; Cairo, Sharmila; et al. Early Childhood Folio 17 (1): 12-18. 2013
- E-portfolios: connecting with parents, whānau and teachers in kindergarten communities. Penman, Raewyn. Early Education, Spr/Sum 2014; n.56: p.10-13
- Engaging with holistic curriculum outcomes: deconstructing 'working theories'. Hedges, Helen; Cooper, Maria. International Journal of Early Years Education 22 (4): 395-408. 2014
- How might teachers enrich children's working theories? Getting to the heart of the matter. Lovatt, Daniel. Early Childhood Folio 18 (1): 28-34. 2014
- Kaupapa Māori assessment: A journey of meaning making. Rameka. L. Early Childhood Journal. 13. 2009
- Looking back, looking forward: three decades of early childhood curriculum development in Aotearoa New Zealand. Nuttal. J. Curriculum Matters. 2014
- Meeting the goals of Te Whariki through music in the early childhood curriculum. Klopper. C. Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 2008, Vol.33(1), pp.1-8. Principled practices: respect and reciprocity through a linguistically responsive pedagogy. Harvey, Nola. Early Childhood Folio 17 (1): 19-23. 2013
- New Zealand teachers talk about *Te Whāriki*. Alvested. M, Duncan. J, Berge, A. New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work, Vol. 6. Issue 1. 3-19. 2009
- Principled practices: respect and reciprocity through a linguistically responsive pedagogy. Harvey. N. Early Childhood Folio 17 (1): 19-23. 2013
- Recent policy developments and the "schoolification" of early childhood care and education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Sophie Alcock and Maggie Haggerty. Early Childhood Folio 17 No 2. 2013
- Strengthening responsive and reciprocal relationships in a whānau tangata centre: A Summary. Clarkin-Phillips. J, and Carr. M. Early Childhood Folio, Annual 2009, Vol.13, p.12(4)
- The Assessment of Children's language in early childhood centres. Blaiklock. K. New Zealand Journal of Educational Studies, 45. 105-110. 2010

- The Ngahere Project: Teaching and learning possibilities in nature settings. Kelly. J and White. E.J. 2013
- Toddlers as Mathematicians? Lee. S. Australian Journal of Early Childhood. Vol. 37, No.1. March 2012
- Transition to school: a principles approach. A. Mortlock, N. Plowman, A. Glasgow. New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work (Online), 2011, Vol.8 (2), pp.94-103
- Troubling Teaching. Stephenson. A. Australian Journal of Early Childhood. Vol. 31. No. 1. March 2006
- Whaka whānaungatanga – partnerships in bicultural development in early childhood care and education. Ritchie. J, Rau. C. Early Childhood Folio 10. 2006
- What are children learning in early childhood education in New Zealand? Blaiklock. K. Australasian Journal of Early Childhood Vol. 38 No. 2. June 2013
- Working with *Te Whāriki*. Wellington: Education Review Office. 2013. Call Number: 372.21 WOR (43725K), p1

Appendix F: Key documents consulted by Advisory Group members

- 21st Century Learning Reference Group. (2014, May). *Future focused learning in connected communities*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Absolum, M., Flockton, L., Hattie, J., Hipkins, R., Reid, I. (n.d.). *Directions for Assessment in New Zealand: Developing Students Assessment Capacities*. Retrived from <http://www.tki.org.nz/r/assessment/research/mainpage/directions/>
- Allan and Clarke (Ltd). (2015). *The Implementation of Te Whariki: Synopsis of Evidence for the Advisory Group on Early Learning*. Wellington: Allan and Clarke (Ltd) for the Ministry of Education.
- Allan, L. and Kelly, B., Editors; Committee on the Science of Children Birth to Age 8: Deepening and Broadening the Foundation for Success; Board on Children, Youth, and Families; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council (2015). *Transforming the Workforce for Children Birth Through Age 8: A Unifying Foundation*. Washington D.C.: The National Academies Press.
- Anders, Y. (2015). *Literature Review on Pedagogy – For a Review of Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in England (United Kingdom)*. Paris: OECD.
- Blissett, W., Church, J., Fergusson, D. M., Lambie, I., Langley, J., Liberty, K., et al. (2009). *Conduct problems best practice report*. Wellington: Ministry of Social Development.
- Buchanan, J., Prescott, A., Schuck, S., Aubusson, P., Burke, P. and Louviere, J. (2013). Teacher retention and attrition: views of early career teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 38(3), 112-129.
- Education Review Office. (2013). *Working with Te Whariki*. Wellington: Education Review Office.
- Educational Transitions and Change (ETC) Research Group. (2011). *Transition to school: Position statement*. Albury-Wodonga, Australia: Research Institute for Professional Practice, Learning and Education, Charles Sturt University.
- Fabian, H. and Dunlop, A-W. (2007). *Outcomes of good practices in transition process for children entering primary school* (Working Paper 42). The Hague, The Netherlands: Bernard van Leer Foundation.
- Fullan, M. (2011). *Whole System Reform for Innovative Teaching and Learning*. Toronto: OISE/University of Toronto.
- Fullan, M. and Scott, G. (2014). *New Pedagogies for Deep Learning Whitepaper, EducationPLUS*. Seattle, Washington: Collaborative Impact SPC.
- Hargreaves, A. and Fullan, M. (2013). The Power of Professional Capital: With an Investment in Collaboration, Teachers Become Nation Builders: *Journal of Staff Development*.
- Hartley, C., Rogers, P., Smith, J., Peters, S. and Carr, M. (2012). *Crossing the border: a community negotiates the transition from early childhood to primary school*. Wellington: NZCER.
- Karoly L., Greenwood P., Everingham S., Hoube J., Kilburn R., Rydell P., Sanders M. and Chiesa J. (1998). *Investing in our children: What we know and don't know about the costs and benefits of early childhood interventions*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Retrieved 5 May 2015 from http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/MR898.html
- Mahmood, S. (2013). "Reality shock": new early childhood education teachers. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 34(2), 154-170.
- Mapp, K. and Kuttner, P. (2013). *Partners in Education: A Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships*. Washington D.C.: SEDL in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te Whāriki: Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.

- Ministry of Education. (2002). *Pathways to the Future: Nga Huarahi Arataki – A Ten Year Strategic Plan for Early Childhood Education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2006). *Nga Arohaehae Whai Hua: Self Review Guidelines for Early Childhood Education*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand Curriculum for English Medium Teaching and Learning in Years 1-13*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2009). *Literacy learning progressions: reading and writing: meeting the reading and writing demands of the Learning Area Te Reo Māori: a guide for teachers*. Palmerston North: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2009). *Te Aho Arataki Marau mo te Ako i Te Reo Maori: Kura Auraki: Curriculum Guidelines for Teaching and Learning Te Reo Maori in English Medium Schools: Years 1-13*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education (2010). *The Literacy Learning Progressions: Meeting the Reading and Writing Demands of the Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education (2010). *Tu Rangatira: Maori Medium Educational Leadership*. Wellington, Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2011). *An agenda for amazing children: Final report of the ECE taskforce*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2011). *Ministry of Education Position Paper: Assessment: Schooling Sector*. Wellington: Learning Media for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *Ministry of Education Working Paper – Strengthening the Learning: Outcomes in Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Education, Draft ECE Learning Outcomes Framework*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2012). *Pasifika Education Plan 2013-2017*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2013). *Ka Hikitia: Accelerating Success 2013-2017: The Maori Education Strategy*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2013). *Statement of Intent 2013-2018*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2014). *The Development of a Framework of Criteria for Aromatawai, A Purakau*. Wellington: Hana LTD for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2014). *Rukuhia Rarangahia: Aromatawai: Ministry of Education Position Paper*. Wellington: Hana LTD for the Ministry of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (2014). *Transition to School Guidelines for Early Intervention Providers*. Wellington: Ministry of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/SpecialEducation/PublicationsResources/TransitionToSchoolGuidelines.pdf>
- Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Much More than Words: Manuka takoto, kawea ake*. Wellington: Ministry Of Education.
- Ministry of Education. (n.d.) Professional Practice Support. Retrieved from <https://www.practice.minedu.govt.nz/home>
- Ministry of Education, Te Kete Ipurangi. (n.d.). Effective literacy practice and the Ready to Read series. Retrieved from <http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Teacher-needs/Instructional-Series/Ready-to-Read/The-theory-behind-Ready-to-Read/Effective-literacy-practice>
- Ministry of Education, Te Kete Ipurangi. (n.d.). Mathematics Aspects. Retrieved from <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Progress-and-Consistency-Tool/The-PaCT-frameworks/PaCT-aspects/Mathematics-aspects>

- Ministry of Education, Te Kete Ipurangi. (n.d.). New Zealand Maths. Retrieved from <http://nzmaths.co.nz/>
- Ministry of Education, Te Kete Ipurangi. (n.d.). Reading Aspects. Retrieved from <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Progress-and-Consistency-Tool/The-PaCT-frameworks/PaCT-aspects/Reading-aspects>
- Ministry of Education, Te Kete Ipurangi. (n.d.). The PaCT Aspects. Retrieved from <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Progress-and-Consistency-Tool/The-PaCT-frameworks/PaCT-aspects>
- Ministry of Education, Te Kete Ipurangi. (n.d.). Writing Aspects. Retrieved from <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Progress-and-Consistency-Tool/The-PaCT-frameworks/PaCT-aspects/Writing-aspects>
- Ministry of Health (2001). *The New Zealand Disability Strategy: Making a World of Difference: Whakanui Oranga*. Wellington: Ministry of Health.
- Mitchell, L., Cowie, B., Clarkin-Phillips, J., Davis, K., Glasgow, A., Hatherly, A., Rameka, L., Taylor, L. and Taylor, M. (2015). *Case Studies of Assessment Practices - Examples from Continuity of Early Learning: Learning Progress and Outcomes in the Early Years*. Wellington: University of Waikato Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research for the Ministry of Education.
- Mitchell, L., Cowie, B., Clarkin-Phillips, J., Davis, K., Glasgow, A., Hatherly, A., Rameka, L., Taylor, L. and Taylor, M. (2015). *Continuity of Early Learning: Learning Progress and Outcomes in the Early Years – Overview Report on Data Findings*. Wellington: University of Waikato Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research for the Ministry of Education.
- Mitchell, L., Cowie, B., Clarkin-Phillips, J., Davis, K., Glasgow, A., Hatherly, A., Rameka, L., Taylor, L. and Taylor, M. (2015). *Continuity of Early Learning: Learning Progress and Outcomes in the Early Years – Report on Literature Scan*. Wellington: University of Waikato Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research for the Ministry of Education.
- Mitchell, L., Meagher-Lundberg, P., Mara, D., Cubey, P. and Whitford, M. (2011). *Locality-based Evaluation of Pathways to the Future - Nga Huarahi Arataki, Integrated Report 2004, 2006, and 2009 – Report to the Ministry of Education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- New Zealand Teachers Council Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa. (2009). *Registered teacher criteria*. Wellington: Author.
- OECD. (2013). *Innovative Learning Environments*. Educational Research and Innovation. OECD Publishing. Retrieved from http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/innovative-learning-environments_9789264203488-en
- Office of the Clerk, New Zealand House of Representatives. (2015). *Government response to Report of the Education and Science Committee on their Inquiry into Engaging Parents in the Education of their Children*. Retrieved from http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/presented/papers/51DBHOH_PAP62121_1/government-response-to-report-of-the-education-and-science
- Ord, K., Mane, J., Smorti, S., Carroll-Lind, J., Robinson, L., Armstrong-Read, A., et al. (2013). *Te whakapakari kaiaarahi ahuatanga ako kohungahunga: Developing pedagogical leadership in early childhood education*. Wellington: Te Tari Puna Ora New Zealand Childcare Association.
- Peters, S. (2010). *Literature Review: Transition from Early Childhood Education to School*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Reedy, T. and Reedy, T. (2013). *Te Whariki: A Tapestry for Life: Curriculum Implementation in Early Childhood Education and Care*. Conference Paper Presented at New Zealand Conference on Early Childhood Education and Care in co-operation with the OECD ECEC Network, Wellington.
- Robinson, V., Hohepa, M. and Lloyd, C. (2009). *School Leadership and Student Outcomes: Identifying What Works and Why: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration*. Auckland: The University of Auckland for the Ministry of Education.

- Sanders, M. R., Ralph, A., Sofronoff, K., Gardiner, P., Thompson, R., Dwyer, S., et al. (2008). Every family: A population approach to reducing behavioral and emotional problems in children making the transition to school. *The Journal of Primary Prevention*, 29(3): 197-222.
- Savage, C. N., Lewis, J., Colless, N. (2011). Essentials for implementation: Six years of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support in New Zealand. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology*, 40(1): 29-37.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I., and Manni, L. (2007). *Effective leadership in the early years sector: The ELEYS study*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Siraj-Blatchford, I., Sylva, K., Muttock, S., Gilden, R. and Bell, D. (2002). *Researching Effective Pedagogy in the Early Years: Research Report No 356*. London: DfES.
- Smith, G. H. (1992). *Tane-nui-a-rangi's legacy: Propping up the sky. Kaupapa Māori as resistance and intervention*. Paper presented at NZARE/AARE Joint conference, Deakin University Australia. November 20, 1992. [Subsequently published in *Creating space in institutional settings for Māori*. Auckland: International Research Institute for Māori and Indigenous Education, University of Auckland].
- Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., Siraj-Blatchford, I, and Taggart, B. (2004). *Final report: Effective Provision for Preschool Education (EPPE) project*. London: Institute of Education, University of London.
- Taguma, M., Litjens, I. and Makowiecki, K. (2012). *Quality Matters in Early Childhood Education and Care: New Zealand 2012*. Paris: OECD.
- Timperly, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H. and Fung, I. (2007). *Teacher Professional Learning and Development: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.
- Whalley, M. (2011). Leading and managing in the early years. In L. Miller and C. Cable (Eds), *Professionalization, leadership and management in the early years*, pp. 13-28. London: Sage.
- Whitebook, M. and Sakai, L. (2004). *By a thread: How child care centers hold on to teachers, how teachers build lasting careers*. Kalamazoo, MI: W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research.

