Briefing Note: Understanding home-based early childhood education: results from the 2017 ECE census

To: Hon. Chris Hipkins
Cc: Hon. Kelvin Davis, Associate Minister of Education
    Hon. Jenny Salesa, Associate Minister of Education
    Hon. Tracey Martin, Associate Minister of Education
Date: 12 December 2018
Priority: Medium
Security Level: In Confidence
METIS No: 1166069
Drafted: Kirsti Rawstron
DDI: s 9(2)(a)
Key Contact: Rebecca Parish
DDI: Yes
Messaging seen by Communications team:

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this paper is for you to:

Note that the report ‘Understanding home-based early childhood education: results from the 2017 ECE census’ is ready for release.

Summary

- This report is the second of three reports we are producing based on the 2017 early childhood education (ECE) census.

- The focus of this report is home-based services. The full report is attached for your reference, and has been reviewed by the team coordinating the current home-based ECE review.

- This home-based analysis was being done at the same time as the finalisation of the 2018 ECE census results and so it does not include the 2018 update.

- We propose to release the report on Education Counts in the week beginning 4 February 2019, and we will work with your office on the exact timing and on any communications material required.
Background

1. The 2017 ECE census ran from 19 to 25 June 2017. In previous years, one detailed report on the results of this census was produced.

2. We have changed our approach for the 2017 ECE census. A high level summary of the results was published in early 2018, with three more detailed reports to follow. This is the second of these more detailed reports.

3. The 2017 ECE census raised the following key points regarding to home-based ECE:
   a. Home-based services have increased significantly over the past decade, from 13,065 children across 241 services in 2008 to 18,440 children across 476 services in 2017. This growth is slowing, however, with 2017 showing only slight growth in the number of home-based services since 2016 and a decline in the number of children attending them.
   b. Home-based services now account for 10% of the total number of licensed ECE services in New Zealand.
   c. Although European/Pākehā children account for the largest number of children at home-based ECE, a higher proportion of Asian and Pacific children attend home-based ECE compared to other ECE service types.
   d. Children attend home-based services for longer each week on average than other ECE service types.
   e. Generally younger children are more likely to attend home-based services for longer hours than older children.

Next Steps

4. This report will be shared with the Ministry’s Early Learning Data and Evidence Advisory Group, a subcommittee of the Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee.

5. We propose to release the report on Education Counts in the week beginning 4 February 2019, and we will work with your office on the exact timing.

6. We will continue to work closely with your office ahead of the release and will provide some communications questions and answers as required.

Other Relevant Information

7. The third report in this series will focus on understanding ECE staffing and is due for release early in the New Year.

Proactive Release

8. We recommend that this Briefing Note is proactively released as per your expectation that information be released as soon as possible. Any information which may need to be withheld will be done so in line with the provisions of the Official Information Act 1982.
Annexes

Annex 1: Understanding home-based early childhood education: results from the 2017 ECE census
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Understanding home-based early childhood education: results from the 2017 ECE census

Purpose

1. This report analyses key aspects of home-based early childhood education (ECE) services in 2017, as well as trends over previous years. It summarises results from the 2017 ECE census (which also surveys ngā kōhanga reo), and ECE data from other sources, all of which are published on Education Counts.

Highlights

2. The 2017 ECE census raised the following key points regarding home-based services:

- Home-based services have increased significantly over the past decade, from 13,065 children across 241 services in 2008 to 18,440 children across 476 services in 2017. This growth is slowing, however, with 2017 showing only slight growth in the number of home-based services since 2016 and a decline in the number of children attending them.

- Home-based services now account for 10% of the total number of licensed ECE services in New Zealand.

- European/Pākehā children account for the largest number of children at home-based services, and a higher proportion of Asian and Pacific children attend home-based services compared to other ECE service types.

- Children attend home-based services for longer each week on average than other ECE service types.

- Generally younger children are more likely to attend home-based services for longer hours than older children.
Home-based services

3. The number of home-based services has increased in recent years, with home-based services now accounting for 10% of total licensed ECE services in New Zealand. The average hours attended at home-based services is the longest in terms of service type, and home-based services offer a greater range of non-English language instruction compared to other service types.

Rise in numbers of home-based services

4. Since 2002 there has been a significant increase in the number of home-based services in New Zealand (Figure 1), although this rapid rise appears to have plateaued between 2016 and 2017. In 2008, there were 241 home-based services in New Zealand, which accounted for 6% of the total number of licensed ECE services. In 2017, there were 476 home-based services, accounting for 10% of total licensed ECE services that completed the census.

Figure 1 Number of home-based services and percent of home-based services overall, 2008 – 2017.

5. There has been a 98% increase in the number of home-based services between 2008 and 2017. This means that over the last decade, the number of home-based services has nearly doubled.

Hours spent at home-based services

6. The average hours a child spent at home-based services during the 2017 census week was just over 23 and a half hours (Figure 2). There was a steady increase in the average hours children spent at home-based services between 2009 and 2015, a small dip in 2016, and a slight rise again in 2017.

7. Of the four main type of licensed ECE services, children attended home-based services for the longest average hours in 2017. This was followed by education and care (22 hours and 50 minutes on average), kindergarten (17 hours on average) and playcentres (4 and a half hours on average). Ngā kōhanga reo do not provide this data in the census.
8. In 2017, 58% of children who attended home-based services attended for more than 21 hours per week (Figure 3), which contributed to the increase the average hours spent at home-based services to over 23 and half hours. Over a third of children attended a home-based service for between 21 to 30 hours each week in 2017, which was the most common amount of time spent at home-based services. Less than 5% of children attended home-based services for 6 hours or less a week, and less than 10% attended for more than 42 hours, indicating that the majority of children attended home-based services for between 6 and 42 hours, rather than at the extreme ends of the duration range.

9. As the ECE census is collected on a per-service rather than a per-child basis, we cannot use the ECE census information to calculate how many children attend more than one service, or more than one service type, each week. It may be that families are supplementing home-based services with other types of ECE, therefore understating the total amount of hours children spend at ECE each week.
10. In general, the younger a child is, the more likely they are going to spend between 21 to 30 hours at a home-based service each week (Figure 4). 48% of children aged less than 1 spent between 21 to 30 hours in home-based services in 2017, compared to 33% of children aged 4. In general, the older a child is, the more likely they are to attend home-based services for 6 hours or less, and they are less likely to attend a home-based service for more than 42 hours.

11. A number of home-based services offer education and care in languages other than English. The census measures language immersion at the service level rather than at the level of individual homes. This means that services offering immersion in multiple languages in different homes are recorded as bilingual. For example, a service where half the educators are Somali and who only speak Somali with children in their care, and the other half are native English speakers will be recorded as bilingual.
However, the children in this service are either receiving immersion in Somali or immersion in English. We will be working on how we can present data relating to bilingual services in future.

12. Of the 476 home-based services in 2017, only 18 home-based services offered immersion in a language other than English in 2017 (4% of home-based services), the majority of which were Northern Chinese (Table 1). In 2016, Northern Chinese immersion home-based services accounted for 74% of all immersion home-based services; they now account for 72%.

13. While the number of home-based services offering immersion language instruction has decreased, a higher proportion of home-based services offer immersion language instruction than education and care services. In 2017, only 3% of the 2,558 education and care services offered immersion language instruction (65 services). Education and care services mostly offer immersion in Pacific languages (and Japanese) compared to the Northern Chinese, Russian and Somali immersion options offered by home-based services.

Table 1 Number of home-based services offering immersion instruction, 2016 and 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Chinese (includes Mandarin)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samoan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somali</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tongan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td>34</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14. New Zealand’s three official languages are not used equally in home-based early childhood education (Table 2). 84% of home-based services use at least some English as a medium of instruction, while 59% of home-based services use te reo Māori at least some of the time, and only 1% (3 home-based services) used New Zealand Sign Language as a language of instruction in 2017.

Table 2 Number of home-based services offering New Zealand’s three official languages by time spent in language, 2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>1-11%</th>
<th>12-20%</th>
<th>21-50%</th>
<th>51-80%</th>
<th>81-100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Te reo Māori</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand Sign Language</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. As no home-based services offered te reo Māori immersion in 2017, parents wishing for their child to learn in a te reo Māori immersion environment could enrol them in a kōhanga reo or an education and care service (Table 3).

16. There were no licensed ECE services in New Zealand which offered immersion education in New Zealand Sign Language in 2017 (Table 3).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3</th>
<th>Number of licensed services offering either te reo Māori or New Zealand sign language by time spent in language, 2017.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Te reo Māori</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education and care</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Home-based</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Hospital-based</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Kindergarten</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Playcentre</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>kōhanga reo</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Zealand Sign Language</strong></td>
<td><strong>Education and care</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Playcentre</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Enrolments/Attendance at home-based services**

17. A lower proportion of children attended a home-based service in 2017 than in 2016. Home-based services contain a reasonably even distribution of children in terms of age, and Pacific and Asian children were more likely to attend a home-based service than Māori or European/Pākehā children.

**Decrease in enrolments/attendance at home-based services**

18. In the past decade, the number of children attending home-based services and the number of home-based has increased. In recent years, however, this growth has slowed and the number of children enrolled at home-based services has decreased (Figure 5). The number of children attending a home-based service has decreased since 2016, when 18,818 children attended a home-based service. In 2017, only 18,440 children attended a home-based service during the census week. The number of children attending a home-based service has decreased since 2015 (when 20,505 children attended home-based services).

19. The percentage of children enrolled in a home-based service remains much lower than the proportion of children who attend education and care or kindergarten services.
Figure 5 Number of children attending home-based services, 2008 – 2017.

Enrolments/Attendance at home-based services by age

20. In general, the percentages of children who attend a home-based service are reasonably evenly distributed by age between the ages of 1 and 3 (Figure 6). Of the children who attended a home-based service in 2017, a quarter were age 1, a quarter age 2, and nearly a quarter age 3. The percentages of children who attended home-based aged 1 or 2 have been consistent over many years, while the percentage of other ages has fluctuated slightly.

Figure 6 Distribution of children at home-based services by age

21. Playcentres have a more even distribution of children by age than home-based services, though home-based services have a higher proportion of children aged 1 or less than 1 than the kōhanga reo, education and care, or kindergarten services. Kindergartens have fewer young children than the other licensed service types, with children aged 4 accounting for over 50% of kindergarten attendees in 2017.
Enrolments/attendance by ethnic group

22. As discussed in the report “Understanding attendance; results from the 2017 Early Childhood Education census”, Pacific and Asian children are more likely to attend a home-based service than Māori or European/Pākehā children: 16% of Pacific and 11% of Asian children attended a home-based service, compared to 7% of Māori and 8% of European/Pākehā children.²

Figure 7 Distribution of children by service type and ethnic group, 2017.

23. After kōhanga reo, home-based services have the lowest proportion of European/Pākehā children (Figure 7). Less than 50% of children who attended a home-based ECE service in 2017 were European/Pākehā (8,623 children); 18% were Asian (3,360 children), 17% Māori (3,087 children), 14% Pacific (2,615 children), and the remaining 755 children had Other ethnicities.

Figure 8 Distribution of children by ethnic group and age, home-based services, 2017

² The ethnic group the child that is enrolled belongs to, as prioritised in the following order: Māori, Pacific, Asian, Other, European/Pākehā. For home-based services, there has been a large increase in the category of ‘Other/Unknown’ since 2007 and particularly before 2010, reflecting a known data consistency issue. It is likely that Māori and European/Pākehā numbers for this service type are slightly underestimated because of this.
24. European/Pākehā, Māori and Pacific children have similar distributions at home-based services by age (Figure 8). There is evidence that older children (aged 3 and 4) from these ethnicities are less likely to attend home-based than younger children, possibly as these children have moved to kindergartens (as suggested by Figure 6). It is more likely for younger Asian children to attend home-based services than children of other ethnicities, with 20% of Asian children at home-based services in 2017 being aged less than 1.

Enrolments/attendance by ethnic group and language of service

25. Asian children are the most likely to be enrolled in an immersion home-based service, followed by Pacific children (Figure 9). Less than 1% of Māori children are enrolled in an immersion home-based service (presumably as Māori language needs are primarily met by attendance at kōhanga reo), while just over 1% of European/Pākehā children are enrolled in an immersion home-based service.

Figure 9 Proportion of children attending immersion home-based services by ethnic group, 2017.

26. Chinese language home-based services are the most common immersion language attended by Asian children, while Pacific language services are the most popular for Pacific and Māori children. Over 60% of European/Pākehā children attend Other language immersion home-based services, and 36% attend Chinese language immersion home-based services.

Coordinators and educators in home-based services

27. The overwhelming majority of both coordinators and educators in home-based services are female, and the number of both has decreased since 2016 (though the number of home-based services has increased). Home-based educators are primarily engaged in the education and care of children. Home-based coordinators are primarily engaged in overseeing the education and care, comfort, and health and safety of the children, along with providing professional leadership and support to educators.

Coordinators

28. There were 736 home-based coordinators in 2017, a slight decrease from 2016 (762 coordinators).

29. There was one male home-based coordinator in 2017, and over 60% of coordinators worked full-time (Figure 10). Since 2015 full-time coordinators have accounted for a larger proportion of the coordinator workforce than part-time coordinators.
30. On average, there were 10 educators per coordinator in 2017 (Figure 11). This is slightly lower than the average of 12 educators per coordinator in 2016 and similar to the averages in 2014 and 2015.

Figure 11 Average number of educators per coordinators, 2014 – 2017.

31. There were 7,512 educators at home-based services in 2017, down from 9,326 educators in 2016. The number of male educators has increased from 24 in 2011 to 233 in 2017, and the proportion of male educators has increased from 0.4% of educators in 2011 to 3.1% (Figure 12).

3 Due to a change in data collection methods, data relating to home-based coordinators is only available from 2012 onwards.
Future work

32. There were a number of questions regarding home-based services that we were unable to answer based on the 2017 ECE census data. These include:
   - the type of qualification by staff, ethnicity of staff;
   - information relating to the actual hours children attend home-based services (for example, are home-based services mostly accessed between 8am and 6pm or outside of these times?); and
   - the socioeconomic status of children attending home-based services.

33. We will be working to answer these questions and others in future reports through combining administrative data with the ECE census.

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*Due to a change in data collection methods, data relating to home-based educators is only available from 2011 onwards.*