

Terms of Reference: Review of Home-based Early Childhood Education

There is good evidence to show that high quality early learning can make a valuable contribution to every child's educational attainment. Home-based early childhood education (ECE) is the fastest growing part of the early learning sector and represents approximately 9% of enrolments. However, not a great deal is known of the effectiveness of home-based ECE in delivering educational outcomes.

The Government has a commitment to undertake a review of home-based ECE (the Review), including investigating the introduction of minimum qualification levels for all home-based educators.

Purpose

The purpose of the Review is to ensure the policy settings for home-based ECE support quality educational outcomes. Most importantly, the Review aims to ensure all parents accessing home-based ECE can be assured their children are receiving quality education and care.

Scope

- provide an overview of the current performance of home-based ECE in New Zealand, including its contribution to quality ECE, child wellbeing, parental choice and responsiveness to diverse communities
- consider international evidence with respect to the policy settings that best support quality educational outcomes, including a specific focus on home-based ECE.
- examine how policy settings can best support quality educational outcomes in home-based ECE in New Zealand, and what their relative costs and benefits are. Policy settings to be examined include:
 - i) *Qualification requirements for home-based educators***
 - assess whether current qualification requirements support quality educational outcomes in home-based ECE
 - investigate whether there is a need for qualification requirements for educators, and at what level these might be set to support quality educational outcomes
 - ii) *Pedagogical leadership and the role of the coordinator in home-based ECE***
 - assess the current role of the coordinator in home-based ECE and whether it supports effective curriculum delivery and quality educational outcomes
 - investigate how to best ensure effective pedagogical leadership and oversight, to support quality educational outcomes and children's health and safety
 - iii) *Employment conditions for home-based educators***
 - investigate working conditions for home-based educators and how these conditions influence the quality and continuity of education and care

- investigate whether policy settings, including regulatory or funding settings, should be adjusted to improve educators' working conditions and the continuity and quality of education and care they provide

iv) Curriculum implementation and monitoring in home-based ECE

- review whether current policy settings, including regulatory settings, support educators and coordinators to effectively implement the curriculum and to be responsive to diverse communities
- identify whether there are ways to improve government oversight of curriculum delivery in home-based ECE, including the licensing and monitoring regime

v) Adult-to-child ratios for home-based ECE and out of school care in one home

- investigate how well recent amendments to the Education Act 1989 (the Act) that allow home-based educators to offer out of school care are working to support quality educational and health and safety outcomes
- identify whether recent amendments to the Act need amending to best ensure quality educational and health and safety outcomes

vi) Quality criteria for funding in home-based ECE and transparency for parents of any government subsidies

- criteria for funding rates, and how these might be adjusted to better incentivise and lift quality in home-based ECE
- improving the transparency of funding so parents can see the level of government subsidies

vii) How the regulatory framework can support quality educational and health and safety outcomes in home-based ECE

- whether legislation, including the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 (the Regulations) and the Act, supports quality educational outcomes in home-based ECE
- any adjustments or changes that could be made to the Regulations or the Act, including the definition of home-based ECE, to best support a high quality home-based ECE sector
- how to best ensure quality educational outcomes, responsiveness to diverse communities and the health and safety of children attending home-based ECE

Out of scope

- non home-based ECE
- private education or care provided in the home which is not licensed by the Ministry of Education and does not meet the definition of an education and care centre in section 310 of the Education Act 1989.

Engaging Stakeholders

The Ministry recognises the importance of engaging the early learning sector and parents in shaping the education system. We will actively engage with all parties affected by the Review, including parents, providers, educators and their representatives.

The Ministry will undertake an initial consultation, beginning in April 2018, with peak bodies representing those most directly affected by the Review. The Ministry will also work with a cross-agency governance group throughout the course of the Review.

Public consultation will begin from July 2018, at which time the Ministry will release a discussion document. The Ministry will consult the public through a range of media including public meetings, online surveys, and targeted workshops.

Indicative time-frames

Public consultation for the Review	July 2018
Policy options considered by Cabinet	November 2018
Implementation of policy decisions agreed by Cabinet.	To be phased from 2019.