

THE KŌRERO MĀTAURANGA: DRAFT EARLY LEARNING STRATEGIC PLAN SUBMISSION ANALYSIS

Final Report

April 2019



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PREFACE

This report has been prepared for the Ministry of Education by Matthew Fanselow and Olga Batura from MartinJenkins (Martin, Jenkins & Associates Limited).

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DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EARLY LEARNING

The purpose of this report is to provide the Ministry of Education with a summary of findings from the 2018-19 consultation on the draft Early Learning Strategic Plan.

The report is structured in line with each of the five goals outlined in the draft Plan. Each section contains both qualitative and quantitative insights.

Engagement with the sector

The report presents insights derived from a series of engagement with the early learning sector. The sector provided feedback in the form of written submissions, attending hui across New Zealand, or completing an online feedback survey. Feedback has been received from:

- Parents / caregivers / family members of children currently attending an early learning service
- Parents / caregivers / family members of past or future users of early learning services
- Kaiako / teachers / educators at an early learning service.
- Managers / owners of early learning services.
- Other respondents, including:
 - Health professionals
 - Board of Trustees members
 - Education consultants
 - Additional learning needs specialists
 - Academics / lecturers / initial teacher education providers
 - Teachers in training

In terms of the overall volume of feedback:

- **2,264** online survey submissions were received.



- **44 public** hui were held across New Zealand, attended by more than **2,000** people.
- **219** written submissions were received by the Ministry of Education.

Structure of this report

Responses were received in the form of written submissions, survey feedback, and hui. Under each of the five goals of the draft Plan, feedback has been separated into “submission and survey insights” and “hui insights”. The “submission and survey insights” sections capture quantitative and qualitative survey feedback and written submissions.

Each section opens with a chart displaying the level of survey respondents’ agreement with the recommendations - these were quantitative likert scale questions. The “submission and survey insights” and “hui insights” sections present a summary of the qualitative feedback received during the engagement. Given the different data collection methods, there are occasionally divergent views presented in a section (for example, the quantitative charts may show support for a recommendation, but the qualitative feedback was presented opposing views or elaborated on the recommendation in greater detail).

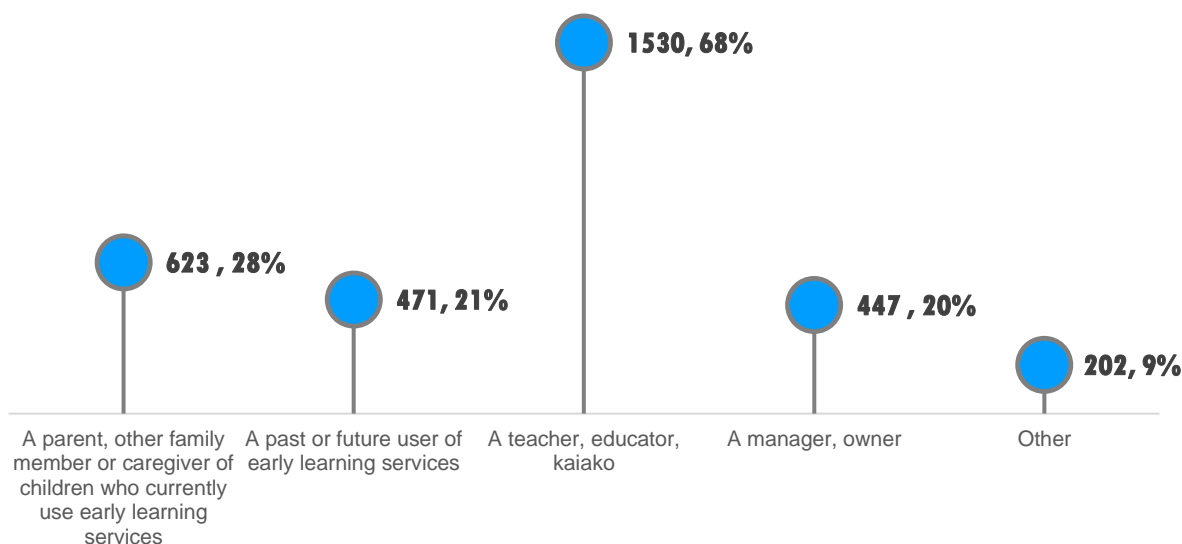
The final section of the report summarises the key content which respondents viewed as missing from the draft Plan.

Survey respondent demographics

Survey respondents were asked to provide select demographic information. Written submissions were also received from individuals and groups, however their demographic information was not collected.



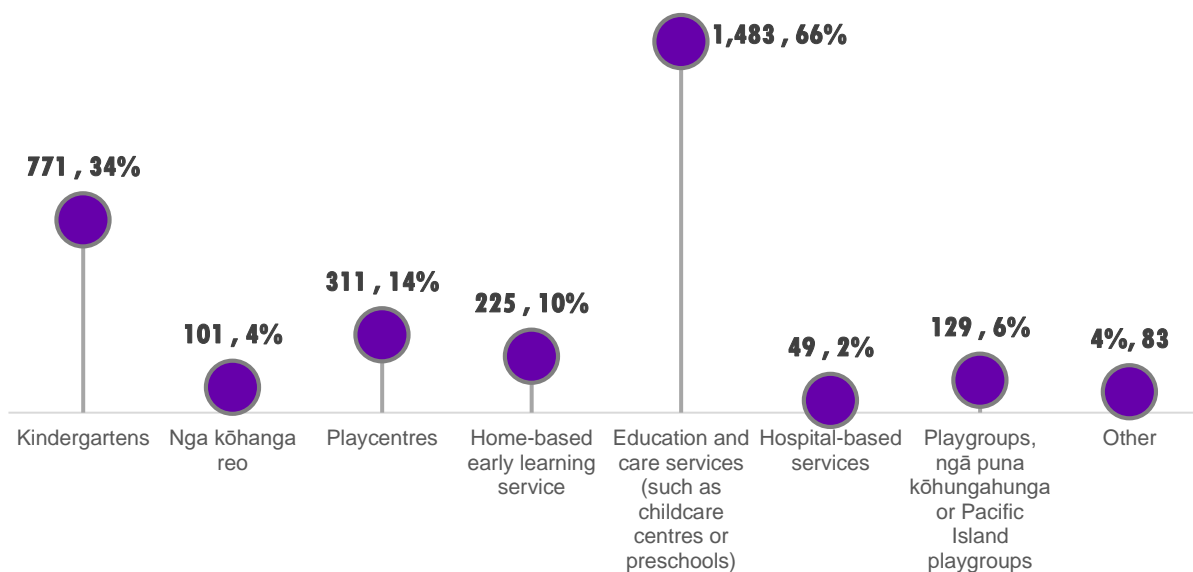
What is your connection with the early learning sector?



Multiple responses were permitted for this question.

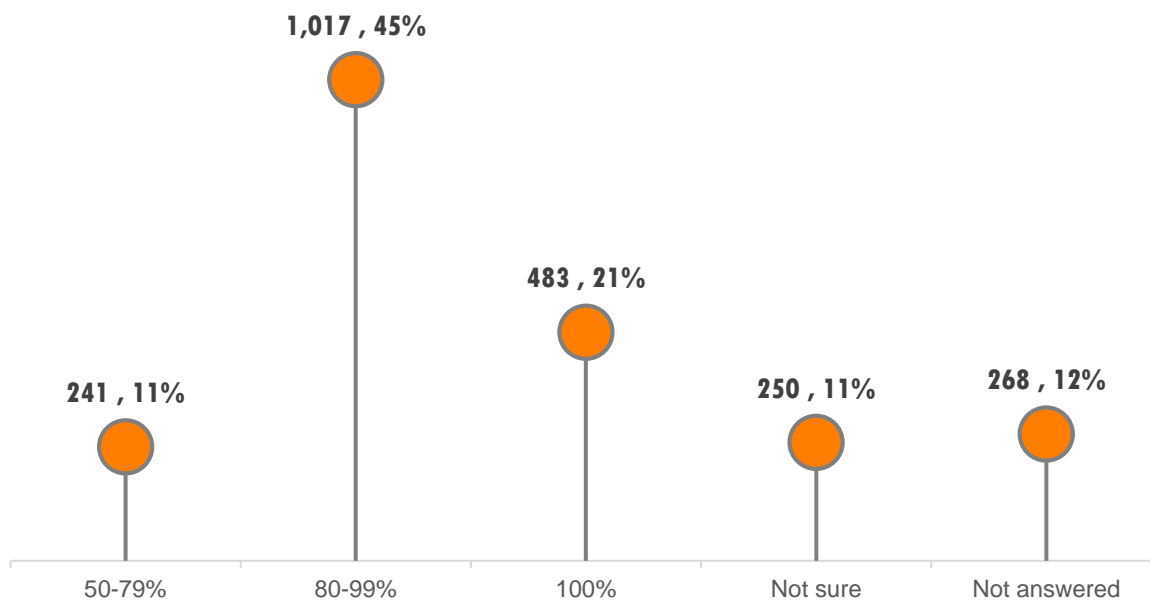
556 of survey respondents classified themselves as both a parent/past/future user of early learning services, and a teacher/educator/kaiako.

Which types of early learning services are you involved with?



Multiple responses were permitted for this question.

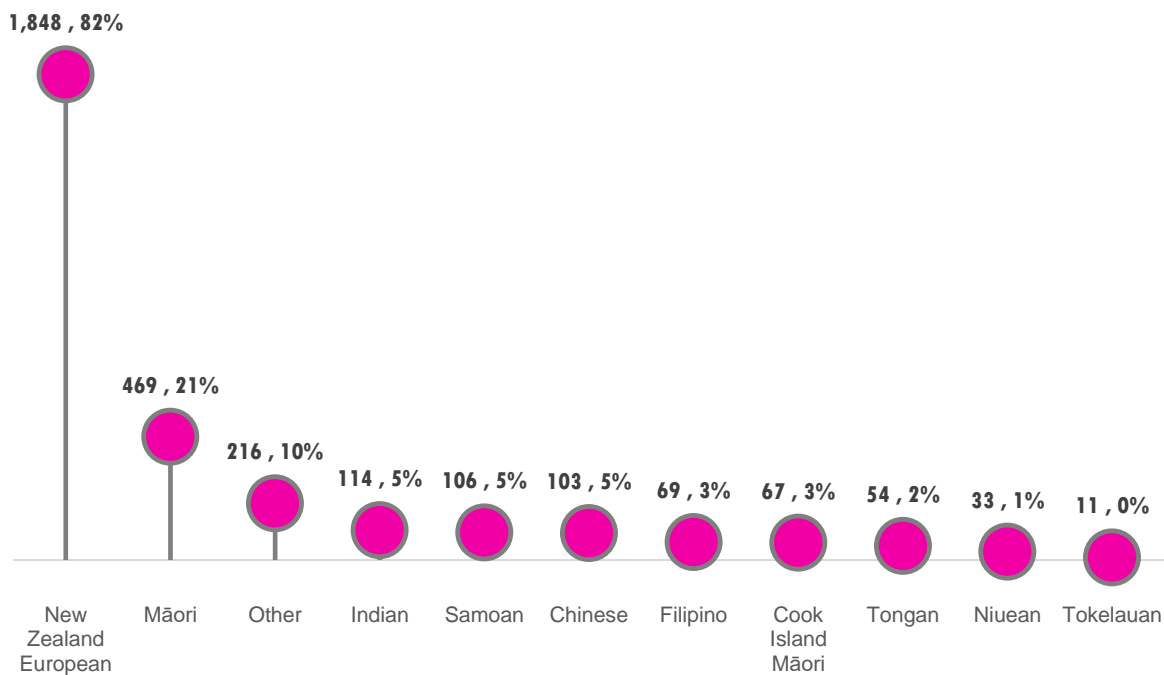
What proportion of qualified teachers are employed at services with which you are involved?



Location of respondents



Ethnicity of respondents



Multiple responses were permitted for this question.



SUMMARY OF EMERGING THEMES

Survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with each recommendation in the draft Plan. Figures 1-5 contain data from survey respondents only.

For readability each chart combines the 'agree' responses ('strongly agree' and 'agree') and the 'disagree' responses ('strongly disagree' and 'disagree'). A full breakdown of responses is listed in Appendix 1.

Goal 1: Quality is raised for children by improving regulated standards

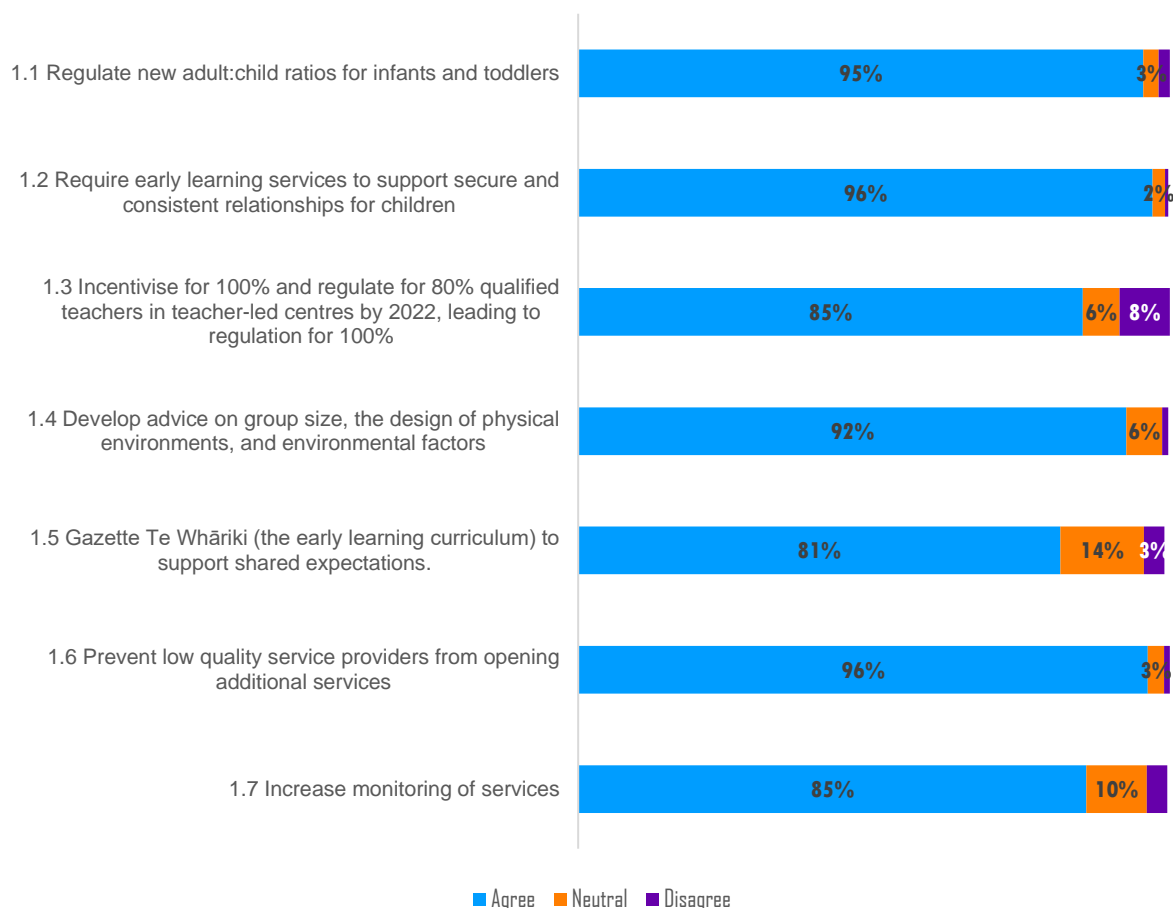
Regulated standards help to create conditions for high quality experiences for children and for teacher practices in early learning services. Standards do not work in isolation; rather they interact to influence quality. In particular, adult:child ratios, teacher qualifications and group size are interdependent. Together, they are linked with improved outcomes for children and contribute towards improving equity, educational achievement and social inclusion.

Agreement with Goal 1 recommendations

Figure 1 shows the proportion of agreement with the recommendations of Goal 1, listed in the order they appear in the draft Strategy.



Figure 1: Agreement with Goal 1 recommendations



Quantitative survey responses only

Submission and survey insights

Improved ratios are supported by the sector, but further changes have been proposed

The recommendation to increase the ratios of adults to children in early learning received the highest number of comments from submitters.

The vast majority of respondents supported the ratios proposed in the draft Plan. This recommendation is seen as an acknowledgement of the pressures which teachers face working



under current minimum ratios, and the difficulties in fostering responsive and consistent relationships in these situations. Better ratios are also supported in terms of improving health and safety in early learning centres, through a reduction in the number of children for whom each adult is responsible. The proposed ratios were also broadly acknowledged as leading to improved wellbeing for both learners and teachers.

“I strongly agree that we need to reassess the ratios. Lower [better] ratios will mean that teachers have time to have quality interactions, and support learning opportunities with all the children all the time”.

While there is considerable support from the sector regarding the improved ratios, a significant volume of feedback has been provided to further improve the ratios and support implementation.

- The most frequent comment received was the need to reduce the under 2 ratio to 1:3, rather than the proposed 1:4. Those respondents who gave an explanation for this proposal cited that the 1:3 ratio would improve responsive relationships and promote secure attachment. Respondents also cited the health and safety benefits of a 1:3 ratio, such as in the event of evacuating a centre, or when several children are in need attention simultaneously.
- The second-most frequent comment received was dissatisfaction with the 1:10 ratio for ages 3 and over remaining unchanged, which many respondents thought should also be improved. The most frequent suggestion for this ratio was 1:8.

Respondents were emphatic that improvements to adult:child ratios need to be implemented as soon as possible, and in advance of the medium and longer-term timeframes proposed in the draft Plan. The prolonged timeframe was seen as continuing to place too much pressure on teachers, and placing the quality of early childhood education at risk. However, a significant number of respondents agree with the proposed implementation time, acknowledging that an improvement in ratios also requires an increase in qualified teachers, which will take time to address.



“It’s widely accepted that better adult to child ratios in Early Learning services are a strong predictor of positive education and care provision in teacher-led centres. The proposed increase in ratios is a sound concept”.

The implementation of this recommendation was raised as a concern by many respondents. Respondents have requested that the Ministry of Education provide advice to help services understand the implementation of the proposed ratios in centres which have children of multiple ages within a .

Respondents said that the proposed ratio changes would require a significant increase in funding, including funding hours beyond the current 30 hour cap to ensure viability and prevent fee increases. Respondents would like confirmation of this increased funding in advance of the ratio changes, or alternatively the ability to “stagger” their transition to the new ratios over time.

The impact of the proposed ratios on the resource consent conditions of centres was raised as a serious risk. The bulk of resource consents have been issued for a specific number of children and staff, which may be breached if more teachers are employed. There are likely to be considerable costs associated with either changing the conditions of the consent, or submitting a new resource consent application. Respondents have requested that these matters are considered in full, prior to any decisions being finalised.

Efforts to strengthen relationships are supported

Respondents who commented were in favour of actions which would support secure and consistent relationships for children. These relationships were seen as a vital component in children succeeding and developing to their full potential. Many respondents advocated for a compulsory primary caregiver model, to ensure that children develop a solid and consistent relationship with at least one teacher. A small number of respondents queried how such relationships can be objectively monitored or measured.



“I like the requirement for early learning services to support secure and consistent relationships for children. This is ideal – but how will it be implemented and assessed?”

While not necessarily opposed to this recommendation, a small number of respondents emphasised that the provision of secure relationships is at the foundation of any early learning service, and already included in the curriculum framework -Te Whāriki - and that any service not achieving this should not be allowed to operate.

Feedback on proposed increases to the percentage of qualified staff is mixed

There was broad support for increasing the number of qualified teachers. This was seen as a major step towards improving the quality of the sector, by having only qualified teachers working with young learners in teacher-led centres. However, responses varied as to the appropriate level of qualified teachers that should be mandated.

The regulation of 100% qualified teachers received mixed support. Some respondents were strongly in favour of regulating for 100% qualified, seeing it as increasing the status of the early learning sector. These respondents drew a correlation between qualified teachers and the provision of quality early learning services, stating that an increase in the number of qualified teachers would increase the quality of the sector overall. Respondents also cited the need for primary and secondary teachers to be qualified as the precedent for having 100% qualified teachers in early learning.

“Early childhood education, like all other education sectors, needs fully qualified teachers, like all other education sectors. Learning begins in these early years and requires a strong foundation”



However, the proposed regulation of 100% qualified teachers received opposition from many within the sector, especially from submissions on behalf of extended-hour¹ services. A significant proportion of respondents had concerns about the possible consequences. The main reasons for this position were:

- A strong desire to retain unqualified staff with valued skill sets, such as te reo Māori.
- To maintain their philosophical diversity, such as Rudolf Steiner.
- A desire to maintain in-service training pathways.
- Many respondents felt that 100% will be very difficult to maintain in rural and isolated areas, and in extended-hours services.
- Regulation could have strong bearing on teacher's ability to take time out for planning, professional learning and development, and the ability of these centres to provide sick leave cover.
- Requiring 100% qualified could result in centres losing passionate and experienced, unqualified staff.
- Having qualified teachers does not necessarily mean quality will be improved.
- Increased financial cost may result in higher fees for families.

I don't agree that 100% qualified teachers necessarily improves outcomes....non-qualified and in-training teachers allow centres to have additional staff who represent the local community. This gives tamariki the opportunity to be cared for by a culturally, racially, and economically diverse workforces that truly reflects their own backgrounds".

¹ Services which operate more than six hours per day.



There was considerable support from respondents regarding regulating for 80% qualified in the medium-to-long term, while incentivising for 100%.

Many wanted 80% regulated now, however some large providers, and providers of extended hour's services, do not see 2022 as a realistic timeframe for achieving 80% qualified teachers in all centres. In particular, extended-hours services emphasised that an increase in regulated teacher levels would require a significant funding increase, to ensure these services could provide qualified teachers across the duration of their operating hours.

A significant number of respondents highlighted the nationwide lack of teacher supply as being the key barrier to regulating the number of qualified teachers. These respondents felt that given the teacher shortage is already acknowledged as a challenge in New Zealand, it is unreasonable and irresponsible to regulate teacher levels in centres until these supply challenges have been addressed.

"I have concerns about kaiako supply. Where are all these registered kaiako going to come from in time, when there is such a kaiako shortage already?"

Although incentivising for 100% was largely supported by respondents, some expressed concern that the lack of teacher supply would have a negative impact with regard to incentives.

Respondents are concerned that the introduction of incentives prior to an adequate supply of teachers will result in adverse competitive behaviour, with centres attempting to "poach" staff in order to achieve the 100% level. Respondents are concerned that this behaviour will have significant adverse impacts on the early learning sector, compromising the quality of service delivery and resulting in negative outcomes for learners.

Respondents support the provision of advice on group size, centre design and environments

Nearly all respondents who commented were in favour of developing advice and standards on group size and the overall design of early learning centres. Many learners spend a considerable



number of hours each week in some form of early learning centre, and as such the respondents advocate that these facilities must be not only engaging and stimulating, but also put the health and safety of learners at the forefront. This relates primarily to the size and layout of the centres, to ensure that facilities are not overcrowded. The provision of quality indoor space that is warm, safe, and healthy, was a strong theme from the sector.

“For many children the environments for ECE and care are primarily living environments. They are residences for children for up to 55 hours per week. There is a need to move away from ‘classrooms’ in centre design, towards home-away-from-home”.

Respondents were strongly in favour of restricting the overall licence size of centres. Many advocated for “smaller” centres, though did not specifically detail the size. The most common figure given was to restrict centres to a maximum of 50 children.

The majority of responses to this recommendation referred to the need for centres to have significant outdoor space, and to have licence applications rejected if they cannot demonstrate sufficient natural environment for learners. Respondents advocated the need to improve the regulation of the necessary provision of indoor and outdoor space, as opposed to providing guidance.

“I am glad that the physical environment is another important issue being considered. The environment itself can be a teacher, but many centres have poorly designed outdoor areas – no grass, trees, no soul! There is no space to run or enjoy the sun or connect with Papatūānuku. Group sizes and even ratios can be easier to work when you have outdoor places to explore and engage tamariki”.



Many respondents expressed concern about the implementation considerations of this recommendation, specifically the costs associated with extending or remodelling centres to comply with any new requirements. Respondents also expressed concern that the Ministry of Education may not have the necessary expertise to develop advice on these matters. These respondents have requested that the Ministry engage with experts, and draw on advice and suggestions from the sector.

Gazetting Te Whāriki received mixed feedback

Most respondents were in favour of this recommendation, while a small number were concerned that it could constrain special character or development of local curricula. Those in favour supported the increased use and prominence of Te Whāriki within the sector, including greater emphasis within initial teacher education. There was an overall appreciation of the bicultural nature of Te Whāriki. Respondents stated that the document needed to be “embedded” within the sector, however many were unsure on the meaning of “gazetting”.

Those opposed to this recommendation did not see gazetting Te Whāriki as a priority, citing concerns that this may be counter to the commitment to local curriculum, for example the priorities of iwi and hapū. The formal adoption of the learning outcomes within Te Whāriki were also raised as a concern, as they were seen by some as narrowing the curriculum and are in conflict with the philosophy of providers such as Rudolf Steiner.

Preventing low quality providers from expanding is supported

Respondents were in favour of preventing low quality services from expanding their operations. However some larger providers felt that they could be unduly impacted and had concerns about the criteria that would be used to determine low quality, and the transparency of the process.

The majority of respondents took a firm line on this recommendation, criticising the ongoing operation of substandard providers as reducing the overall quality of the early learning sector. Most respondents would like to see this recommendation implemented as soon as possible.

“This recommendation should be implemented in 2019 as it sends a strong quality message to the early education sector and should limit low quality services from undermining the survival of quality providers



particularly those working successfully in our most vulnerable communities.”

In addition to preventing low quality providers from expanding, the majority of respondents would like to see poorly performing centres shut down as well as being prevented from opening other services. Respondents would also like to see anyone involved in a failing centre (owners and directors) being prevented from establishing new services under a different company name.

Respondents expressed concerns that this recommendation may inhibit good providers from purchasing centres which are struggling, and work to improve them, as this would impact their overall rating. Respondents also expressed concern regarding differing requirements and standards across the regions, with respondents having experienced both ERO and the Ministry of Education applying different interpretations of the same regulation in different regions.

Respondents have mixed views on the increased monitoring of services

The majority of respondents were in favour of increasing the monitoring of early learning services.

These respondents felt it necessary, to ensure the continued delivery of high-quality services, for monitoring to be more frequent. There was a strong view from the sector that sub-standard centres are continuing to be allowed to operate, having fallen under the radar of the monitors.

The majority of respondents were in favour of developing a “tiered” monitoring model, whereby poorly-performing centres were visited more frequently than those who were delivering high-quality services. In extreme cases, some respondents advocated using the increased monitoring to shut down poorly-performing centres; however the majority of respondents were in favour of using the increased monitoring as a tool to support and mentor poor providers to help them improve.

There was considerable emphasis on the need for ERO monitors to have an early childhood education background, to ensure they were qualified to conduct reviews of early childhood (in contrast to the primary and secondary sectors). There were strong expressions that the ERO and Ministry of Education staff undertaking monitoring visits need to be culturally competent. This was particularly emphasised by Māori, Pasifika, and bilingual centres, which have requested the need



for monitoring teams to consist of advisors who can recognise and understand the cultural competencies being taught within centres, and not evaluate them purely through a “Western” lens.

“We see the Ministry should play a supportive role and provide advice and guidance. Further they need to establish a Pacific team of advisors who understand the cultural competencies that children need to ensure that they are able to fully participate as Pacific citizens”.

Respondents were strongly in favour of unannounced “spot checks” from monitors. These random visits were seen as an effective tool to ensure centres were continuously performing to a high standard, as opposed to making a “special effort” for the planned visit.

“Why give the centres notice of a visit? This gives poorly-run centres the opportunity to fake their practice, to cover up their imperfections until after ERO have been, then they go back to normal. I have seen this in centres where I was doing my teacher training”.

In contrast, a large number of respondents were opposed to the increased monitoring of centres. This was due to concerns that increased monitoring would place additional time and resource pressure on centres that were already struggling. These respondents were also concerned that random or spot visits would not produce constructive relationships between centres and ERO, and that centres deserved the opportunity to plan and prepare for a monitoring visit.



“Increased monitoring, especially unannounced visits, will damage relationships between services and the monitoring agent. This would be counter to developing trust and building the relationships necessary to provide advice and support and work with services to ensure quality”.

Hui insights

Overwhelming support for lower ratios

Hui attendees were strongly in favour of the proposed adult:child ratios. These ratios were seen as having a range of positive benefits, including improving relationships and attachment, less stressful environments, and allowing teachers to better support diverse learner needs.

Attendees were not in favour of the ratio for 3 year olds and over remaining unchanged. They would like to see a reduction to at least 1:8, with maximum group size also regulated. Many attendees also stated that the under 2 year old ratio needs to become 1:3, to ensure infants are in the safest possible environment and allowing teachers to form proper connections and bonds.

Hui attendees had differing views on the timing of implementing the ratio changes. Some wanted the changes to take effect much sooner, while others acknowledged the difficulties in terms of staff shortages, and did not want to make changes too rapidly as this would put increased pressure on existing staff. The major theme from attendees was for the Ministry of Education to work with the sector to implement what changes were possible as soon as possible, without making major changes before the teacher shortage was addressed.

Strong relationships between teachers and learners is supported

There were minimal comments received from hui attendees on this recommendation. Those who commented stated that secure and consistent relationships are fundamental and non-negotiable in early childhood education, and are a strong indicator of good quality services. Attendees advocated the need for consistent staffing and rosters, to ensure these relationships can form. If it



were to become a requirement as part of any monitoring visit or review, attendees were unsure how this could be assessed or measured.

There are mixed views on increasing to 100% qualified teachers

The majority of hui attendees were in support of moving to 100% qualified teachers, and the return to 100% funding. Attendees felt that this recommendation would increase the status of the early childhood education sector, and acknowledge the value of early childhood teaching as a profession.

However, a considerable number of attendees disagree with regulating 100%, and instead would like to regulate for 80% but continue to incentivise for 100% qualified teachers. The primary reason for this was a lack of teacher supply, which attendees argued would make it difficult to achieve 80% by 2022, let alone move to 100%. These attendees also highlighted that by establishing the regulated level at 80%, centres would be able to retain their highly experienced and valued, but unqualified, staff. This point was made with particular regard to older teachers, who are highly experienced but would be unlikely to consider training. The risk of losing these passionate people from the sector was seen as a significant risk for centres.

Hui attendees would like to know whether teachers-in-training would count towards the percentage qualified. Attendees would also like to see a better system for acknowledging and accepting the qualifications of staff who have trained overseas.

Providing advice on centre design is strongly supported

Hui attendees were strongly in favour of developing advice and guidance on the overall environment of centres. This feedback was primarily focused on establishing minimum outdoor space requirements, to ensure that learners were exposed to natural and green spaces. Attendees would like to see the necessary size of outdoor space regulated, rather than suggested or advised.

Hui attendees were also strongly in favour of increasing the overall physical size of centres, to ensure that learners have ample indoor space (but using group size limits to prevent overcrowding). Attendees were also in favour of configuring centres in such a way as to provide quality quiet space for children to sleep.

A small number of respondents expressed concern that many existing centres will be unable to increase the amount of indoor or outdoor space they have, and have sought clarification on how these centres will be accommodated in any future regulatory changes that may be proposed.



Gazetting Te Whāriki is supported

Attendees were largely in favour of gazetting Te Whāriki. The document was viewed as taonga, and providing a national measure of quality and consistency in delivering early childhood education.

Those opposed to gazetting Te Whāriki were concerned around creating a “one size fits all” model for centres, which would restrict a centre’s ability to focus on holistic learning.

Strong support for preventing low quality providers from expanding

Increased actions to prevent low quality providers from expanding were strongly supported by hui attendees. Attendees would like to see the Ministry of Education take a “firmer hand” with poor quality providers, as they risk damaging the sector more broadly. Hui attendees were also strongly in favour of low quality providers being shut down, in addition to being prevented from opening other centres.

Increased monitoring of services is supported

Hui attendees were in favour of increasing the monitoring of early learning services, which was viewed as an effective means of ensuring quality service delivery. Hui attendees would like to see centres visited at least once every two years. Attendees were in favour of using random or spot visits to assess centres. Attendees have requested clarity as to what will happen to centres that continually receive poor reviews, and how long they will be allowed to continue operating.

Attendees were also strongly in support of ERO monitors having an early childhood background.



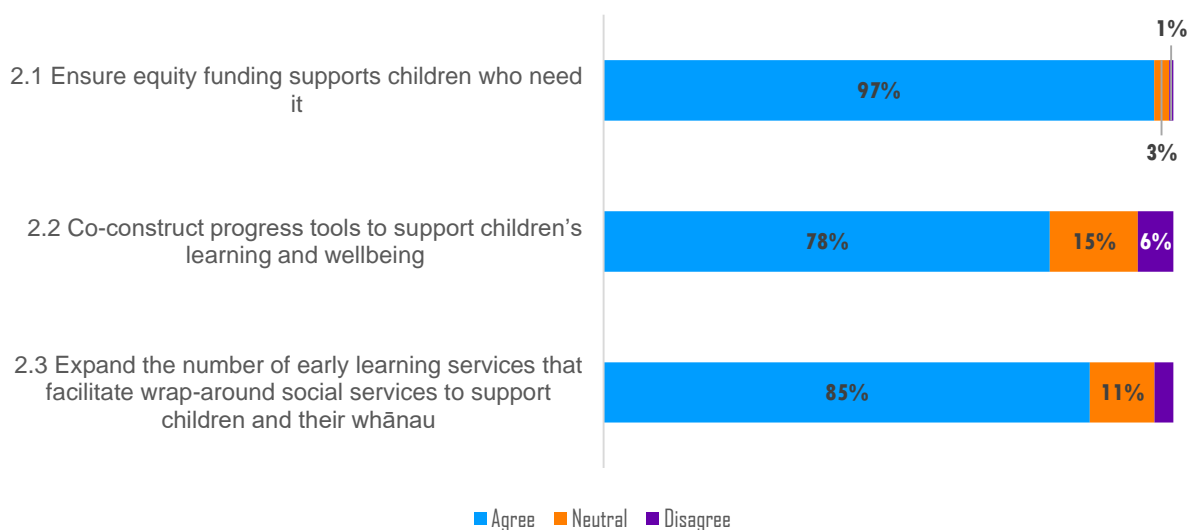
Goal 2: Every child is empowered through timely access to the resources they need to thrive

The draft plan begins from the belief that every child is a taonga. The plan is underpinned by the notion of 'equity from the start' and recognises that early learning experiences have the power to influence children's life trajectories.

Agreement with Goal 2 recommendations

Figure 2 shows the proportion of agreement with the recommendations of Goal 2, listed in the order they appear in the draft Strategy.

Figure 2: Agreement with Goal 2 recommendations



Quantitative survey responses only



Submission and survey insights

Review of equity funding is favoured by the sector

The majority of respondents are in favour of reviewing equity funding. The current view within the sector is that equity funding is allocated “based on postcodes” and not adequately targeted at those learners who need it. There is considerable emphasis from the sector that this funding needs to follow the child throughout their time in early learning: if they move to a different centre, the funding should follow them.

“We need to ensure that equity funding goes to those who need it. I am a head teacher of a centre that doesn’t qualify for equity funding, yet we are attended by children from areas around us which are funded. The current system doesn’t seem fair to those who do not attend early learning in their own area”.

Respondents feel that there is insufficient equity funding available to the sector, and that many learners miss out on resources and support as a result. A significant increase in the available equity funding pool is a strong theme from respondents.

A number of respondents also expressed concern that equity funding is taken by for-profit centres and used to increase their profit, rather than going to the children who need it. As part of the review of equity funding, respondents have requested implementing a monitoring system which requires centres to prove they have used the funding for its intended purposes.

A number of respondents would like to see an increase in the use and visibility of New Zealand sign language within the draft Plan, and within the sector as a whole. Respondents were concerned that despite being one of the three official languages, sign language has been omitted from the Plan, to the detriment of deaf and hearing children alike.



“Equity funding needs to be actually used for its purpose. Currently some profit-based centres just take it as more profit, and it doesn’t get used on the children. There should be real and actual proof of where the money goes”.

Feedback on the development of progress tools was mixed

Figure 2 shows that 78% of survey respondents support the development of progress tools. Many of these respondents took the meaning of “progress tools” to extend beyond academic considerations, and to look at the child holistically and cover a range of developmental areas, including language, intellectual, social-emotional, and motor development, and nutritional health and wellbeing. Several health and science advisors and those working with disadvantaged communities were strongly supportive of progress tools, and viewed them as helpful in identifying when children need additional support, and in facilitating efficient access to specialist support.

“The Welcome to School Research undertaken by Starship Paediatric Clinicians, has found that Before School Checks are failing to detect significant dental, obesity and other health and wellbeing issues including poor language development. A key finding of this research is that there is a “normalisation of the abnormal” in Tamaki in that a significant proportion of families do not report issues that would be immediately highlighted in other communities”.



However, in the qualitative feedback, many other respondents were concerned that “progress tools” could be interpreted as being similar to national standards, and involve the formal academic-centred assessment of learners. Such an approach would be strongly opposed by the sector, who fear they will become a “tick box” summative assessment tool.

“My only worry here is having 'tools' to track progress. Having worked in the UK in early childhood, their tools to track children's progress very much were used as a tick list, something that is not good for children. It also placed way too much pressure on teachers who were blamed for some children not progressing. Every good teacher will do their best by every child, and children, especially in this age group, progress at such different rates, I would not want to see it go down that path. No-one wants to make a young child feel like a failure early on”.

A large number of respondents stated that the outcomes listed in Te Whāriki were appropriate for assessing learning and wellbeing, and that therefore there is no need to develop additional tools or measures. Respondents also noted that other elements of the draft Plan (proposed increases to professional learning and development, improved ratios, improvements to initial teacher education, and increased numbers of qualified teachers) will enable teachers to form better relationships with learners and to more accurately assess learner progress.

The majority of respondents felt that any progress tool or assessment metric must take a holistic view of the child, which takes into account the different rates at which children learn and develop. The feedback from the sector emphasised that any tool:

- must leverage Te Whāriki, as a great existing resource to support learning
- be capable of being tailored to each learner and their own milestones
- be used to support the development of children, rather than as an accountability measure



- incorporate learning stories
 - look at the learner as a whole, including health and wellbeing, nutrition, behaviour, and home life.
-

“We have the opportunity to design unique and fit-for-purpose tools, embedded within the social and cultural, teaching and learning context of Aotearoa New Zealand”.

Wrap-around services are supported by the sector, but only if they are well-implemented

The expansion of wrap-around services was strongly supported in the submissions. The majority of respondents felt it was vital for early learning services to facilitate easy access to these services, or to have services physically located on-site. In particular, respondents emphasised the increasing number of children presenting with behavioural issues and learning difficulties, and the lack of access to funding or services to support them. Many respondents stated that there are already a sufficient number of support services in existence (there is no need to establish more), but that these services are underfunded and not working in collaboration with the early learning sector.

“As a community-based centre we see the huge need for wrap-around services, working in or alongside centres, to support our whānau and community. There are too many families struggling in the community and this is having a huge impact on our tamariki”.

While the majority of respondents agreed with the need to expand the provision and access to wrap-around services, and highlighted the benefit these services would have on teachers, children,



and their whānau, the sector provided a broad range of considerations for the successful implementation of this recommendation.

- Respondents were clear in the need for a significant increase in funding to realise this recommendation. The sector has emphasised that if the expansion of wrap-around services is to be successful, and truly provide help and support for learners, it needs to be properly funded.
- Respondents were keen to ensure that wrap-around services would be available to all centres and regions, and not concentrated in the main cities. This was especially important to respondents from rural communities or smaller towns, who highlighted the difficulties they face in getting access to support services. The development of “hubs” for the delivery of services to multiple early learning centres was identified as being of particularly high value for these rural and isolated centres.
- A lack of access to early learning support was a widespread concern. Respondents universally cited that the time it takes to access support services, or get a referral to a specialist, was highly detrimental to the wellbeing and development of learners. Respondents would like to see additional funding targeted specifically at reducing referral wait times.
- Respondents were keen to ensure that increased access to wrap-around services did not take time away from teaching. Some respondent’s proposed only accessing services after teaching hours, or implementing specific hours during the week in which learners could access services, but which did not impact on teaching time.
- There was mixed feedback as to the groups which these services should target. Some respondents felt that services should be targeted at lower-socioeconomic areas, while others felt this was discriminatory and that services should be accessible for all. Some respondents want wrap-around services to focus solely on the learner themselves and address behavioural or learning difficulties. Other respondents want these services to be open to whānau as well, to help with access to medical services, nutrition information, and general parenting support.



Hui insights

Reviewing equity funding is a positive step

Hui attendees were in favour of reviewing and expanding access to equity and targeted funding. The hui feedback emphasised that equity funding needs to follow the child, and not be focused on specific geographic or socioeconomic areas. The funding also requires accountability or monitoring mechanisms, to ensure that it reaches those who need it. Additionally, some attendees advocated the need for equity funding to go towards providing support from elders and cultural experts, to provide specific support to Māori learners.

The hui attendees echoed the sentiments of the written submissions, emphasising that there is an overall lack of funding available to provide the support to these learners. Hui attendees would also like to see easier access to equity funding.

Development of progress tools is supported by a small number of people, but specific concerns need to be addressed

A small number of attendees stated that they supported the development of progress tools, if the tools were used to genuinely support learning or to identify areas in which learners were struggling.

Similarly to the written submissions, the hui attendees voiced a range of concerns about the progress tools and the shape they should take. There was concern that the progress tools will be, or turn into, a tick box-style assessment or resemble national standards. There was also concern at the idea of “assessing” children in early learning centres, focusing on academic considerations rather than play-based learning, behavioural development, and socioemotional development. Some hui attendees also noted that progress tools are unnecessary, as high quality teachers are able to identify and address areas of learner difficulty without the need for formal assessment.

Strong support for expanding wrap-around services

Wrap-around services were strongly supported by hui attendees. Wrap-around services were seen as being vital to supporting the health, wellbeing, and learning of children in early learning services. Some attendees proposed exploring a range of different services and delivery options – for example, the services delivered through kōhanga reo may differ from the services delivered via



Playcentre or a community-owned centre. This was seen as a way to effectively streamline delivery, without duplicating services. Hui attendees were also of the view that wrap-around services should be aimed at children and their whānau together, rather than solely on the children.

Hui attendees were also keen to address the current wait times for accessing specialists and support services. They emphasised that timely intervention is critical to helping learners in need, not only for the benefit of the learner, but also the mental wellbeing of teachers.



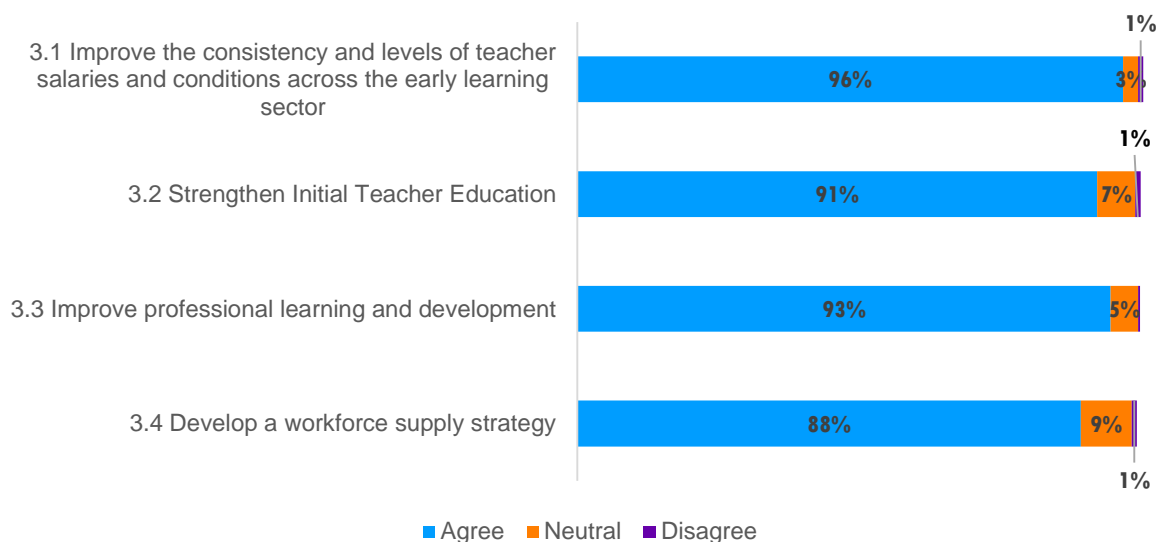
Goal 3: Investment in our workforce supports excellence in teaching and learning in all services

All children should have equitable access to a well-qualified workforce that mirrors the diverse cultures and genders that constitute Aotearoa New Zealand. This draft plan promotes an integrated approach to recruit, retain, grow and develop our workforce, including reinvigorating progress towards a well-qualified teaching profession.

Agreement with Goal 3 recommendations

Figure 3 shows the proportion of agreement with the recommendations of Goal 3, listed in the order they appear in the draft Strategy.

Figure 3: Agreement with Goal 3 recommendations



Quantitative survey responses only



Submission and survey insights

Improvements to the consistency and level of teacher salaries and conditions are supported

Respondents were hugely supportive of this recommendation. The majority of respondents cited that they had not had a meaningful salary increase in several years, and that an increase to teachers' salaries would be the single most impactful action the government could take towards improving the sector. This was the view expressed through written feedback from both survey respondents and written submissions; however, this recommendation was ranked as the third-most important priority by quantitative survey respondents (Table 1). The major themes emerging in regards to salaries were:

- Developing a pay scale based on the level of qualification held by teachers.
- Implement reward/performance bonuses.
- Rewarding long-term service through higher salaries.
- Increased salaries will help to stabilise the workforce through reduced turnover.
- Increase salaries will attract more people into the teaching profession.

"I love the idea of improving teacher salaries, as it is what we deserve. It will likely help keep us in the profession, and attract people to work in an industry that is often undervalued and underappreciated by the general public".

Pay parity was another strong theme in this area. Feedback was heavily in favour of formalising comparable pay rates across private centres, community centres, and Kindergartens. The levels of salary and conditions of Kindergartens were most-frequently cited as benchmark for the entire early learning sector.



A common theme throughout the submissions was a perception from the sector that they are viewed as “babysitters” and that the job is undervalued by society. Improved salaries and conditions were tightly linked to an increase in value and a recognition of early learning teaching as a profession.

Of those not in support of this recommendation, the majority agreed with increased funding, however they did not think they should be required to engage in collective bargaining. This was because respondents wanted to reward exceptional practice rather than years of service, and also did not want a ceiling on salaries.

“In privately owned centres we ensure that the starting wage is the same for everyone and regular reviews take place. However it is not reasonable to think that everyone performs at the same level, or involves themselves more passionately and productively at the same level. Based on a sound system of appraisal we can assess and pay more deserving staff at higher rates, and not just based on length of service”.

Improving the consistency and quality of initial teacher education is supported

Respondents expressed considerable concern at the varying quality of initial teacher education (ITE) in New Zealand.

Respondents were concerned at the number of students who lack general subject matter knowledge, with ITE placing too much focus on theory and not enough emphasis on subject matter and practical knowledge. Some respondents were dismayed at the high number of graduate teachers with sub-standard literacy and numeracy skills. The majority of respondents blamed ITE providers for these problems, for being too lenient in their screening and admissions processes.



“We utilise student teachers as a means to keep our practice up to date. Over the years it has been quite alarming, the difference in knowledge and standards across teacher education providers. Strengthening ITE is another way to ensure and set the mark for quality”.

A number of submissions from health providers were critical of the lack of focus on health and nutrition in ITE. Respondents would like to see an increased focus on healthy eating (such as the Heart Foundation’s Healthy Heart programme), emphasis on exercise and active movement, and a focus on the effects of extended screen time on learners.

Respondents would also like to see ITE strengthened with regard to promoting and supporting the workforce to understand diversity and become more inclusive of disability rights. Some of these respondents would like to see a goal developed to promote teaching as a career among disabled people, to ensure that teacher education is welcoming, accessible, and inclusive. Respondents were also concerned that newly registered teachers need to be better supported at the beginning of their careers and that the Plan needs to explicitly address this.

Respondents would like to see a reduction in the number of ITE providers. A large number of respondents would like to see ITE provision predominantly provided by universities, with greater monitoring and overview of polytechnic programmes. They felt that this would shift teacher supply away from a “production line” model, and allow time and resources to be concentrated into ensuring all ITE provision is consistent, and produces high-quality teachers. Respondents expressed concern about the recruitment of Pacific Island teachers. There is a strong sentiment that Pacific teachers are being penalised by the insistence on the IELTS, when if they are teaching in a Language Nest they will not need this level of English. Respondents would like to see initial teacher education become more welcoming of diversity and tailor requirements specific to different types of teachers.

Finally, respondents would also like to see a greater multicultural emphasis in ITE. A bicultural approach (English and Māori) was considered to be a fundamental bottom-line for all provision of



teacher education; but beyond this, many respondents have pushed for ITE to be more inclusive and considerate of the increasing diversity in New Zealand. This includes undertaking practicums at a diverse range of centres, increasing the development of cultural and linguistic competencies in ITE.

Improved professional learning and development is supported

An improved and sustained approach to professional learning and development received positive feedback from the sector. Professional learning and development is vital to ensuring that high-quality early childhood education is embedded and maintained across New Zealand.

“Improving professional learning and development would be fantastic. There are so many kaiako who wish they could attend PD but it is not possible because the costs are way too high”.

The three main themes to emerge from this recommendation were:

- The quality of professional learning and development.
- The affordability of professional learning and development.
- The accessibility of professional learning and development.

Respondents would like to see all professional learning and development be well-managed and delivered to a high quality. Many respondents stated that much of the current professional learning and development is not up to the standard they would expect. In addition to quality, respondents would like to see consistency in delivery across the country – to ensure that all services have access to the highest quality professional learning and development.

The cost of professional learning and development was a key concern for the majority of respondents. This took the form of either the cost of the training itself, or the cost of travel and the cost of funding teacher release time in order to attend the training. There was a perception that professional learning and development was biased towards larger, profit-focused centres, which could afford the costs of training as well as having sufficient staff to cover absentee teachers. Respondents have requested greater financial support for professional learning and



development, or the provision of free training. Respondents would also more paid release hours, to enable staff to attend training without cost to themselves.

"Cost is often seen as a barrier to accessing PLD for our centre, which is a non-profit centre. Financial support should be available so there is no barrier to teachers accessing PLD".

The accessibility of professional learning and development was highlighted as a concern by many respondents. Barriers to access were mainly raised by respondents from small towns or rural centres, which were at a geographic disadvantage to access professional learning and development courses. These respondents cited travel requirements and a lack of relief teachers as the main barriers to access. Respondents would like to see more effort in developing digital professional learning and development tools and seminars, which can be accessed without the need to travel. Popular suggestions for professional learning development content were leadership training and development, and cultural competency training.

"Professional learning needs to be available to the regions and smaller towns, as well as large cities. This would make it more equitable for all teachers to attend".

Developing a workforce supply strategy is well-supported

Feedback from the sector was strongly in favour of developing a workforce supply strategy. A lack of teacher supply was a prominent theme throughout the submissions, and the proposed workforce supply strategy is seen as a constructive to address the issue.

Respondents clearly highlighted that achieving reduced ratios and increasing the proportion of qualified teachers will depend heavily on the development of this strategy, in order to attract talent to the sector. In addition to attraction, respondents emphasised the need to make progress



on additional recommendations (salaries, conditions, ratios) in order to retain existing staff within the sector.

“A workforce strategy is going to be integral in services being able to meet the proposed 100% qualified staff criteria. As a service we already struggle to find qualified staff to fill vacancies, with applications lower than ever before”.

A key area of focus was the need to support and promote diversity among early childhood teachers. The sector would like to see more action around attracting and training Māori and Pacific teachers, both for Māori and Pacific-centric centres, but also to increase cultural diversity and exposure within the mainstream sector. Respondents would like to see a more straightforward process developed, to enable qualified teachers from overseas to teach in New Zealand with greater ease. Respondents would also like to see an increase in the number of males working as early childhood teachers.

Hui insights

Improved working conditions and salaries are well-supported

Hui attendees were strongly in favour of efforts to bring consistency to the sector in terms of salaries and working conditions.

Consistency and pay parity across the sector was the most common theme, with attendees wanting salary consistency across all provider types. There were also a large number of comments in favour of the government paying early childhood teachers directly, in line with primary schools, in an effort to ensure that any additional government funding is passed on in teacher salaries. There was a strong push from the hui to move any increase in teacher salaries in to the short-term phase of the draft Plan.



Strong support for improving initial teacher education

Hui attendees were strongly in favour of improving the quality and consistency of initial teacher education across New Zealand. Attendees did not believe that all universities and other providers were on the same level in terms of quality teacher education. Attendees felt that consistency in this area would produce graduates of a similar calibre with the same knowledge base, which would ensure that employers and centre managers could be assured of high quality and highly capable teachers.

In terms of improving the content of initial teacher education, many hui attendees emphasised that te reo Māori and tikanga components were lacking across providers. It was also highlighted that there is a lack of Pacific-focus within initial teacher education, and that many Pacific peoples find it difficult to gain entry to teacher training due to the overly strict English language requirements.

Increased investment in professional learning and development is strongly supported

Hui attendees were strongly in favour of improved professional learning and development. Attendees supported an increase and improvement in professional learning and development overall, but provided examples of specific training and learning opportunities they would like to see become more common. These were:

- Teacher education, and changes to best practice
- Governance and management training and support
- Leadership training
- Whole-of-centre professional learning and development

Attendees were also critical of the lack of professional learning and development in te reo Māori or Pacific languages, or focusing specifically on cultural learning and development. Attendees would like to see a much greater emphasis on cultural learning and development, including easier and affordable access.

Attendees also emphasised the need for professional learning and development to be made readily available to rural or isolated communities, and not be confined to the main urban centres.



A workforce supply strategy is supported, and needs to be a top priority

Hui attendees were supportive of developing a workforce supply strategy (although this recommendation was ranked as the third-most important priority by survey respondents). The strategy was seen by hui attendees not only as a way of increasing teacher recruitment as a whole, but as a constructive and effective means of expanding the diversity of early childhood teachers. Particular emphasis was given to the need to attract more Māori and Pacific teachers – attendees suggested expanding the available scholarships, particularly to attract and support prospective teachers in rural areas. Attendees would also like increased emphasis on attracting more male teachers to the sector.



Goal 4: Planning ensures that provision is valued, sufficient, and diverse

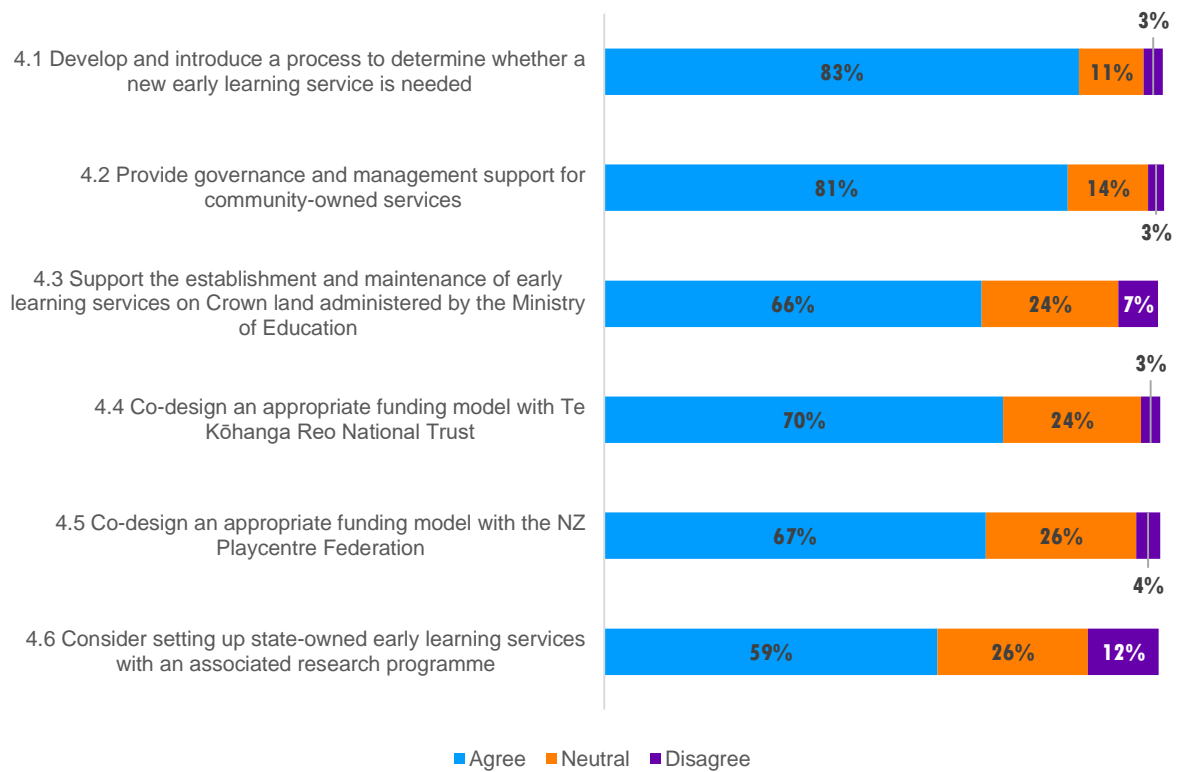
Early learning services have expanded rapidly over the past decade in an unrestricted environment. In some areas this expansion may be outstripping local need or may not be the best fit for what is required. There are some areas where there is insufficient local provision or where provision does not meet the needs and aspirations of parents and whānau. It is timely to consider an expanded role for the Ministry of Education in network planning to ensure there is valued and diverse provision for every child.

Agreement with Goal 4 recommendations

Figure 4 shows the proportion of agreement with the recommendations of Goal 4, listed in the order they appear in the draft Strategy.



Figure 4: Agreement with Goal 4 recommendations



Quantitative survey responses only

Submission and survey insights

Respondents are strongly in favour of a process to determine where a new service is opened

Respondents were strongly in favour of establishing a process for determining whether or not a new service should open.

Respondents provided multiple reasons for this view. These were:

- The view that competition in early childhood education does not produce quality.
- Excessive numbers of private centres competing for learners rather than providing high-quality education services.



- High numbers of untrained teachers within some private centres.
- The expansion of centres exacerbating the lack of teacher supply.

The majority of respondents advocated for community-owned centres to be given priority. Respondents reasoned that smaller community-owned centres delivered higher quality education and overall services than larger capacity centres, which are often privately run.

“Having a process to assess what type of ECE services are needed in an area is a great way to stop oversupply. A free-market approach to ECE is driving down the quality of ECE provision to all our tamariki”.

A considerable number of larger providers were opposed to developing a process for allowing the establishment of new services. These respondents felt that the government determining where a new centre can open would stymie healthy competition and limit the provision of different types of services. The view of these respondents is that:

- Limiting the provision of centres may lead to complacency or stagnation of existing services.
 - Existing centres may not be meeting the needs of learners.
 - Limiting the provision of centres may prevent innovative service offerings, such as Montessori or Rudolf Steiner.
 - The criteria for determining whether or not a service may open are unclear.
 - The planning and regulatory environment is complex, and the Ministry of Education is not best-placed to make informed decisions on these matters.
 - This recommendation may have the adverse effect of protecting poorly-performing services.
 - Market supply and demand forces will determine where there is a need for new services.
-

“I feel the development of new services should be left to the demands of each region and local area. The close proximity of services can be a



result of the diversity within the sector, as some may not enrol their children in a service near them, but choose a different service due to the philosophical values or beliefs of their chosen centre”.

While supporting the recommendation overall, many respondents questioned how the process would look, and how it would be developed. Respondents proposed a combination of options, including looking at the number of centres already in an area, the quality/performance of each existing centre in the area, or the total population in the area. However, the majority did not provide their own solutions and left it as a question for the Ministry of Education.

Governance and management support is favoured, but should be extended to all services

Community-owned, standalone centres were viewed as being vulnerable to the expansion of larger, service providers, and therefore in need of greater support. Respondents felt that community-owned centres were the “heart” of early childhood education in New Zealand, and that they deliver the highest quality of service.

“Individual, community services governed by volunteers are in immediate need of expert, passionate, and practical help”.

However, many respondents felt that the provision of governance and management support should be extended to all centres. Most of those who provided reasons for this view felt that it was unfair for only one type of provider to receive this support from the Ministry of Education. They reasoned that all service types – private and community-owned - would benefit from governance and management support.

Some respondents also argued that isolated or rural, but privately owned centres, are also in particular need of governance and management support. Despite being privately owned, these



centres argue that they do not have the benefits of larger service providers, which have layers of management support.

Some respondents proposed that governance and management could be better supported by:

- The Ministry of Education working closer with other government agencies, such as the Community Development Group of the Department of Internal Affairs, which offers governance and management support for the community sector.
- Supporting and encouraging shared governance arrangements, such as independent community-owned centres moving under the umbrella of a larger community-based entity.
- Reintroducing previous models of governance and management support, such as the 'advice and support' model from Pathways to the Future 2002-2012. This model also included a specific focus on Pasifika services at the regional level.

Feedback regarding early learning services on Crown land is mixed

Many respondents were in favour of this recommendation. Many cited kindergarten as the primary example of success in this area. These respondents viewed early learning services on Crown land as fostering and supporting the secure transition of learners from early learning into primary school, due to the strength of the connection between the two services. The close proximity of early learning services and primary schools was seen as extremely beneficial for resource sharing, including shared professional learning and development. Feedback was mixed as to whether community-owned services should be prioritised for places on Crown land, or whether a merit-based system (rather than ownership) needs to be developed.

A large proportion of respondents were critical of the proposal to establish early learning services on Crown land – however, many of these respondents had conflated services on Crown land with the services also being state-owned. It is therefore difficult to make an accurate judgement based on these responses.

Co-designing a funding model with kōhanga reo is supported

The majority of respondents stated that they were in favour of co-designing a funding model with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust. Most respondents did not elaborate further, but those who did emphasised that kōhanga reo have a unique place in the New Zealand education sector. Ngā



kōhanga reo were described as being “with Māori, for Māori, by Māori”, and providing an exceptional and immersive cultural environment for tamariki.

“Kōhanga reo absolutely needs to be recognised for their tohu and funding bands alongside ECE. This should be in line with Te Tiriti obligations”.

A small number of respondents disagreed that a funding model should be developed specifically for kōhanga reo. These respondents would like to see funding distributed equitably across all providers, without specific provider types being singled out.

Respondents are supportive of co-designing a funding model with Playcentre

The majority of respondents are in favour of a funding model being co-designed with the New Zealand Playcentre Federation. Respondents emphasised that playcentre has a special place in the New Zealand education sector. Playcentre is seen as offering a unique and high-quality service, which provides varied learning experiences and excellent adult:child ratios.

“The current Playcentre funding model does little to recognise the high ratios that Playcentre provides, and the fact that all of the work within a Playcentre is undertaken by volunteers/parents. More funding allocated to administrative tasks would allow more parents the time to undertake higher levels of adult education within Playcentre, and focus their time and effort on supporting children’s play and learning”.



A small number of respondents disagreed with the emphasis on Playcentre. These respondents felt that if Playcentre received increased funding, it should be regulated in line with teacher-led early childhood centres, including qualification requirements.

State-owned early learning services were not well-supported, and opinions are mixed regarding research centres

The majority of qualitative feedback was not in favour of establishing state-owned early learning services (however 59% of quantitative survey responses were in favour of this recommendation). Rather than establishing state-owned early childhood services, the majority of respondents suggested that the government provide more resources and funding to existing centres. Qualitative respondents felt that:

- State-owned ECE would have disproportionate access to resources.
- State-owned ECE would offer higher pay rates than the rest of the sector.
- The government could not objectively evaluate or review its own centres.
- Government should not commit public funds to these services when there is sufficient private capital available. The government would be best to focus its support on existing centres.
- The Ministry of Education should remain focused on policy, not delivery.
- Public kindergarten already fills this role.

Respondents felt that it would be a significant conflict of interest for the government to establish and maintain early learning services, when it also has a responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the sector. Respondents did not feel that the state sector could offer anything better or different to a private or community-run centre.

A number of respondents advocated for early childhood education to be fully owned and delivered by the state sector. These respondents felt that state-ownership of early childhood education would ensure nationwide consistency in terms of quality and salaries.



“The setting-up of state-owned ECE which are totally government funding and supported would only put pressure on privately owned centres that are already struggling to make ends meet”.

Responses were more mixed regarding the establishment of research programmes. Those in support of the concept liked the idea of an expert and well-resourced model providing research and insights into learning and education, in a New Zealand-centric context. Those who were doubtful about the research programmes were concerned about the reallocation of funds to the idea, away from the core expenditures of salaries and professional learning and development. Some respondents felt that research was best left to universities to conduct in conjunction with the early learning sector, rather than being early childhood-led.

The recommendation of research centres was supported as being state-owned, but not necessarily attached to a state-owned early learning centre. There was perception from respondents that research centres attached to state-owned centres may become exclusionary, or would be located in major urban centres, to the detriment of rural services.

“Research programmes should not be limited to state-owned ECE centres. There are a lot of kaiako out there who might like to do research, and it should be available to all those who want to access it”.

Hui insights

A process to determine new centres is strongly supported

Attendees were strongly in favour of developing a process to determine whether a new centre should open, to address the oversaturation of services in a given area. Putting these controls in



place was seen as a check against the quality of service provision declining. It was also seen as critical in preventing large corporate providers opening in an environment which did not need a new service. Attendees would like this process developed as soon as possible.

Governance and management support is seen as beneficial, but should be extended to all centres

Hui attendees supported the provision of governance and management support to centres. The governance of centres is often comprised of parents or volunteers, and these members would benefit from advice and support to help improve their capabilities. However, a small number of attendees would like this support extended to all centres, including private providers.

Establishing centres on school grounds is supported

Respondents were in favour of establishing early learning services adjacent to primary school sites. This was seen as enhancing collaboration between early learning and primary schools, and easing learner transition. However, a small number of attendees were concerned that this recommendation would contribute to the oversupply of early learning services.

Co-designing funding models are supported for both ngā kōhanga reo and playcentre

Hui attendees were supportive of the Ministry of Education co-designing equitable funding models with both Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and the New Zealand Playcentre Federation. Each of these services were seen as being unique in the New Zealand early learning sector, and needing to be “treasured”. Attendees felt that kōhanga, in particular, should receive equitable funding in line with primary schools.

State-owned early childhood services are largely opposed

Hui attendants provided mixed views on the establishment of state-owned early learning services and research programmes. A small number of attendees were in favour of establishing state-owned services, however the majority were opposed. Some respondents who were opposed to this recommendation felt that Kindergarten already filled this role, and that the recommendation would reinvent the wheel. Respondents were also concerned that state-owned services risked becoming generic, and losing the uniqueness which develops at community-owned centres.



Additionally, attendees expressed concern about a potential conflict of interest with the Ministry of Education reviewing or monitoring centres which were Crown-owned.



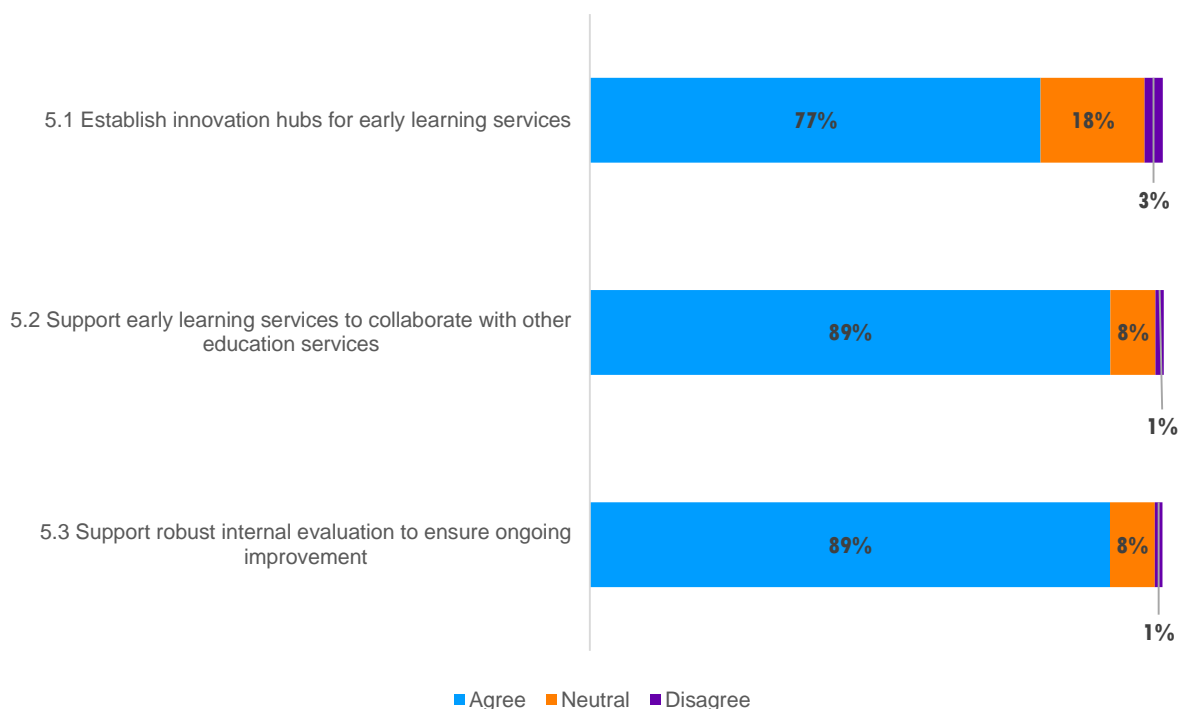
Goal 5: The early learning system continues to innovate, learn, and improve

The ability to innovate and improve, by drawing on new ideas and evidence of effective practice, is at the core of high quality provision that contributes to equitable outcomes. In this draft plan we envisage a broad and connected learning system that is continuously improving to benefit all New Zealand children.

Agreement with Goal 5 recommendations

Figure 5 shows the proportion of agreement with the recommendations of Goal 5, listed in the order they appear in the draft Strategy.

Figure 5: Agreement with Goal 5 recommendations



Quantitative survey responses only



Submission and survey insights

Establishing innovation hubs is supported, but there are concerns about resourcing

The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposal to establish early learning innovation hubs. These hubs were seen as a robust means of promoting early learning as an equal partner in the education sector, and redressing the view of early learning as “babysitters”. Respondents were excited to see the development of a research-specific programme for early learning which offered the chance to collaborate with experts from across the education sector. Hubs were also viewed as a great source of professional learning and development, enabling teachers to tap into the experience and expertise of their peers. Many respondents felt that innovation hubs would be of particular benefit to rural and isolated early learning centres, and would enable them to access resources and support which they may find difficult to access in their community.

“Innovation hubs in the area of the strategic plan that I am most pleased about seeing included. I believe this acknowledges the creativity and innovation of early childhood teachers, and empowers teachers to again lead best practice in their education centres”.

A smaller proportion of respondents expressed doubt about the development of innovation hubs. Respondents presented a mixture reasons for their doubt. These were:

- Innovation hubs will take away centre emphasis on teaching and working with whānau.
- The financial investment will not return sufficient benefit.
- The funding would be better spent on addressing the teacher shortage.
- Collaboration between centres and services is already supported.
- Hubs may end up being dominated by certain teachers, and fail to be inclusive.



Additionally, these respondents felt that Kāhui Ako already fulfil the role of supporting innovation and sharing best practice. Respondents would like to see more work done to make early learning services an equal member of Kāhui Ako, alongside other segments of the education sector.

There is strong support to increase sector-wide collaboration

Respondents were strongly supportive of increasing collaboration within the education sector. Increased collaboration reflected many of the themes identified in the previous recommendation, primarily access to expertise and shared resources. Respondents felt that increased collaboration was vital to establishing equitable and high-quality early childhood education nationwide. Similarly to the above recommendation, respondents felt that this recommendation would be of particular benefit to rural and isolated centres, who could draw on knowledge and resources from more populated urban areas.

“I like that there will be increased collaboration with other sectors of the education system. This will give the ECE teachers similar status to other teachers, no matter the age group they are working with”.

Respondents acknowledged that there is already a considerable amount of collaboration within the education sector – either directly between providers, or through Kāhui Ako. These respondents welcomed the proposal to dedicate time and resources to ensure that this collaboration can continue, in either a formal or informal capacity. Many respondents saw increased collaboration as playing a vital role in supporting children in their transition from early learning to primary school – stronger relationships between early learning teachers and primary teachers could better facilitate a smooth transition for the children by helping the children to be more familiar with their new teachers, what is expected of them in primary school, and to support their sense of belonging.

A small number of respondents expressed concern about sector collaboration, emphasising that early learning is often overlooked and their voices not heard in the wider sector. There is a push for collaboration with all parts of the sector to be respectful and on equal grounds.



Robust internal evaluation is supported, but there are concerns about workload

Overall feedback was in favour of developing a system to support early learning services to self-evaluate. This recommendation was universally seen as helping services to ensure they are continually improving, and that the education and services they are delivering remain high quality and in line with best practice.

"I am passionate about internal evaluation and the development of our learning and professional practice. High quality and reflective internal evaluation supports positive outcomes for kaiako, children, and their whānau. This kōtahitanga approach to improving our ways of knowing, being and doing is undervalued, and could do with more support from the Ministry of Education".

A large number of respondents stated that there were already a significant number of centres undertaking formal internal evaluations or regular reviews of processes and performance. The view of many in the sector is that "high quality" early learning services already have these processes in place, which has enabled them to achieve their level of quality. However, the feedback also requested that ERO need to have a core role in the internal evaluation of centres – providing an objective peer-review of findings and processes, to validate the findings and ensure they are accurate.

In order for the evaluations to be meaningful, respondents have requested specific professional learning and development in conducting evaluations. This PLD is to address the fact that most teachers do not understand or have little experience in formal evaluation. It is also to ensure that teachers appreciate that the purpose of the evaluation is to practically and meaningfully support the improvement of their services, rather than being a compliance activity for the Ministry of



Education. A small number of respondents advocated for this work to be undertaken by qualified evaluators, rather than teachers.

“We need more support for internal evaluation, so that centres know what to do and how do it and what it looks like. Internal evaluation is the best way for centres to improve themselves and their practices – major support is needed here”.

Although the majority of feedback supported the intentions of this recommendation, respondents expressed concern about the impact the evaluations would have on workload. Respondents felt that there are already considerable demands on teacher time, which will be exacerbated by the time and paperwork requirements of conducting ongoing evaluations. The feedback called for an increase in paid non-contact time to ensure that teachers can dedicate sufficient time and attention to conducting robust and meaningful evaluations.

“Internal evaluation and review is so critical in improving outcomes for children and teachers. But you need to think very carefully about how you can support centres to do that – it is no good giving us more paperwork and higher expectations, but not giving us paid non-contact time to plan and process and evaluate”.



Hui insights

Innovation hubs are supported

Overall the hui attendees were in support of developing innovation hubs. The hubs were seen as a way to reinvigorate the sector and increase collaboration between providers. Attendees emphasised that the hubs must not come at a cost to centres, or interest in them may decrease.

Some hui attendees felt that innovation hubs sounded similar to Kāhui Ako, and proposed encouraging centres to work with their Kāhui Ako rather than duplicating the service.

Increased collaboration across the sector is supported

Hui attendees were very supportive of increased collaboration with other education services. Their view was that increased cooperation and partnership may increase the status of early childhood education within the sector, and serve to attract more people to the profession.

Robust internal evaluation is supported

Attendees were supportive of centres conducting their own internal evaluations. These evaluations were seen as a way to promote internal staff development, and ensure centres were delivering best practice. However, attendees noted that training and support will need to be provide to most centres, who are inexperienced in conducting evaluations.



PROPOSED PHASING OF IMPLEMENTATION

Feedback on the phasing of recommendations

The 10-year draft Plan proposes implementing the 23 recommendations over a “short”, “medium”, or “long-term” timeframe. Survey respondents were asked for their views on the proposed phasing of implementing the recommendations, and what suggestions they have for altering the phasing.

Respondents gave feedback on the priority of specific Goals, and on the timeframe in general.

Goal-specific considerations of phasing

The phasing preference for each Goal, based on survey feedback, is:

- First priority: Goal 1
- Second priority: Goal 3
- Third priority: Goal 4
- Fourth priority: Goal 2
- Fifth priority: Goal 5

The overwhelming majority of respondents listed Goal 1 as the most important priority for the government and the sector. Within Goal 1, respondents prioritised the regulation of adult:child ratios at the most important consideration. The clear expectation from the sector is that reduced ratios will be the first action undertaken by the government.

However, a large number of respondents have requested addressing the overall teacher shortage before implementing reduced ratios, as the ratios will put even more pressure on the supply of qualified staff.



“Ratios and group sizing need to be addressed NOW. IT is so unfair for all our infants and toddlers to be in care with inadequate staffing and group sizes that create stress for both children and staff”.

The second-most important priority, overall, is to increase the number of qualified teachers. The sector feedback was supportive (conditionally) on increasing to 80-100% qualified teachers, and returning to the associated 100% funding level. These considerations are seen as inextricably linked to the provision of world-class early childhood education. Respondents have also requested that centres which already meet the threshold should have their funding increased immediately.

A small number of respondents expressed reservations regarding Goal 1. The majority of these concerns related to the supply of teachers necessary to achieve the goal of 100% qualified teachers. Respondents proposed phasing in the 100% qualified level over the duration of the Plan, while providing ongoing incentives to the sector and initial education providers to attract more people into the profession.

Goal 3 was rated as the next most important Goal to be implemented. Goal 3 is seen as intimately linked with Goal 1. Goal 3 was emphasised as a high priority for the sector because it will support and enable a well-qualified workforce to further grow and develop, attracting passionate individuals to the early learning sector. The improvement of salaries and working conditions within the sector was the most important consideration of Goal 3, which are seen as delivering almost immediate benefit to the sector.

“Goal 3 is an absolute top priority for us and our centre. We believe that without addressing this Goal, very little else will be achievable”.

The majority of support for prioritising Goal 4 related to the development of a process to determine if a new early learning service is needed in an area. Respondents would like to see this recommendation made a priority by the government in order to:



- Provide a mechanism to prevent low quality providers from expanding.
 - Ensure that there are enough qualified teachers to staff all centres.
 - Control, and target, government spending on early learning.
 - Provide support to community-owned, less financially-secure centres.
-

“I think introducing process to determine whether a new early learning service is needed needs to be prioritised. The public system is struggling to survive when big commercial players set up right next door. This is across high decile areas as well as lower”.

General feedback on the proposed phasing of implementation

Respondents provided a range of feedback on the proposed timeframe for implementation.

Feedback on the proposed timeline is supportive

Overall, respondents agree with the timeline proposed in the draft Plan. The feedback received shows that respondents are in general comfortable with the proposed spread of Goals and recommendations over the 10 year period. This was emphasised regarding the increase in qualified teachers, with the sector stating clearly that this recommendation will take more time to achieve than many of the others. However, many respondents have urged the government to begin implementing as many of the Goals and recommendations as soon as possible, to demonstrate its commitment to changing the sector.



Lack of clarity on the timeline

Some respondents have expressed concern at the lack of clarity on the proposed implementation timeline. Respondents were unclear as to the definition of "short", "medium", and "longer" term in the timeline, and have requested the government provide confirmation of what is meant by these ranges.

"What is the definition of short, medium, and long term? Is short months or years? How many years is medium? How many years is long? An indication of the actual time would be useful".

Proposed timeframe is not sufficiently ambitious

In contrast to those who viewed the timeline as too optimistic, a much higher number of respondents felt that the proposed changes need to be implemented sooner than proposed. These comments were rooted in the view that the sector has been underfunded and undervalued for a number of years, and that any delays to making changes to the sector would further degrade the quality of early childhood education in New Zealand. These respondents would like to see the implementation of as many of the recommendations as possible begin immediately.

In addition, respondents expressed considerable concern about the longevity of the Plan in relation to political change. A large number of respondents expressed that the Plan needs to be "embedded" so as to ensure it cannot be abandoned by any future changes of government. In line with the feedback outlined above, respondents would like to see earlier implementation of as many recommendations as possible, to make it more difficult for successive governments to amend or alter the Plan. Respondents would also like to see greater emphasis given to establishing cross-party support for the Plan, to further ensure its durability.



“It appears that the Ministry is trying to implement way too much, way too quickly. This could lead to ideas and plans that are not well thought out. Take the time to consult and think”.

Proposed timeline is too optimistic

A small number of respondents expressed concern about the proposed timeline. Respondents felt that the proposed timing is overly optimistic and ambitious, given the magnitude of changes that are proposed for the sector. This was particularly linked to the issues of teacher supply, in order to achieve the proposed increase in qualified teachers, as well as implement the proposed ratio changes. Concerns were expressed that the sector may begin to suffer from “change fatigue” if too many change recommendations are implemented too soon. Respondents have requested an extended period of consultation with the sector, to ensure that all changes are implemented thoroughly and with sufficient consideration to the possible impacts on the sector.

Will the Plan be continued if there is a change of government? We have had a strategic plan before which was not completed and all the work that went into it was lost. Are we repeating the same stuff again for another 10 years of waiting?”

Achievability of 80% qualified teachers regulation

The draft Plan proposes regulating for 80% qualified teachers in teacher-led services by 2022. Survey respondents were asked for feedback on how achievable this target is for their centre. A total of 1,524 responses were received for this question.

Survey respondents had mixed views on the feasibility of achieving 80% qualified teachers by 2022.



- 19% of respondents felt the target is achievable
- 29% reported having already achieved, or surpassed, the target
- 12% felt the target would be very difficult, or unachievable
- 39% felt the target is achievable only if certain conditions are fulfilled.

Of the 39%, the vast majority stated that teacher supply was the main challenge. These respondents did not believe it would be possible to produce a sufficient number of qualified teachers before 2022. To help address this challenge, many respondents proposed developing a custom, abridged programme to enable currently unqualified (but highly experienced) staff to become qualified. Many of the larger early learning providers did not believe the 2022 goal was possible.

In addition to the teacher supply challenges, respondents identified funding as a major hurdle to achieving the 80% target. Funding was primarily linked to salaries, and the need for pay rates to be increased in order to attract more people into the teaching sector. Funding was also identified as a key lever to attract teachers to areas which may find the 80% target especially challenging – these included Auckland and Queenstown (cost of living concerns) and rural areas (isolation).

A small number of respondents felt that the proposed timing was too generous. These respondents felt that the timeline for 80% should be “earlier”, which many stated as being 80% qualified teachers by 2020.



SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL CONTENT

Respondents were asked whether they felt anything was missing from the draft Plan. Many of the comments on what is missing (such as improving the adult:infant ratio) have been discussed previously in this report. This section summarises the major themes that were provided, which have not already been discussed. Themes are not presented in any specific order.

A lack of detail regarding funding

Funding was the most common theme throughout the engagement. Respondents emphasised that for each proposed recommendation there would need to be a commensurate increase in allocated funding, or the provision of specific resources.

While some recommendations would not require significant cost increases, others, such as increasing the proportion of qualified teachers or improving ratios, would need considerable investment – particularly for extended-hours services. Respondents have requested more detail as to the quantum of funding that the government intends to commit to each recommendation, and the timing at which this funding will be made available.

In addition to questions around funding for specific recommendations, respondents would like more information on the timeframe and levels of a “general” increase in funding to the sector. These comments reflect the view of the sector that it has been underfunded for several years, and that an immediate increase in “bulk funding” will be hugely beneficial for the sector. Respondents would also like to see a much more streamlined and simplistic funding model.

Failure to align the draft Plan with the Review of Tomorrow’s Schools and other government initiatives

Respondents were critical of the lack of coordination between the Tomorrow’s Schools review and the draft Plan. Many respondents expressed concern that the two projects were working in isolation, failing to acknowledge that “cohesion from birth through to high school” is needed in the sector, rather than treating the learners as unrelated cohorts.



Respondents emphasised the need for “seamless” transitions between early learning and primary school, to give learners the best possible beginning to their schooling. Respondents feel that the current silo approach of the two projects not communicating with each other will fail to facilitate this transition, and result in duplication of tasks and resources, as well as producing an overall lack of alignment within the education sector.

In addition, respondents are keen to see better alignment between the early learning strategic plan and current initiatives in the government’s wider work programme.

“Currently there appears to be much work to be done on the ECE draft plan, and it needs to be aligned with the reforms of Tomorrow’s Schools, so that there will be a closer working relationship between schools and ECE centres. This would support our precious tamariki with a more seamless transition to school”.

A lack of emphasis on te Tiriti o Waitangi obligations and explanation of how the plan lifts education for Māori

Many respondents felt that the draft Plan is lacking in emphasis on Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Respondents would like to see strategies to enact Te Tiriti woven through the draft Plan, with particular emphasis needed on ensuring fluent te reo Māori speakers amongst the early learning sector.

“Fluent te reo Māori speaking role models for under twos should be prioritised, and the provision of these given additional funding”.



The development and application of high-quality, culturally responsive practice was emphasised by a broad range of respondents. It was stated that children who are exposed to multiple cultures and languages are more likely to succeed educationally, and in life. Respondents would like to see an increase in engagement and consultation with mana whenua prior to any changes being implemented. Some respondents would also like to see the development of a cultural accountability framework and an evaluation on the suitability of Māori cultural standards within early learning services. The emphasis on tikanga and te reo Māori was emphasised in relation to the expectations regarding Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Respondents have also expressed the need for the draft Plan to work more closely with the Maihi Karauna strategy, and the Māori Education Strategy. This is to ensure that strong connections are made to existing material and strategies which are relevant to the early learning space.

A lack of emphasis on Pacific cultures

The need to develop language and cultural resources for Pacific children was also emphasised. These respondents would like to see Pacific cultural knowledge and diversity incorporated throughout the early childhood sector. Respondents have requested that Pacific educators be given leniency regarding the IELTS, as many of their teachers are aging and will not meet the targets of the IELTS. However these teachers are needed in the sector to provide valuable cultural knowledge to children, particularly within Language Nests.

A lack of conversation about home-based learning

Respondents would like to see the Plan have a greater focus on home-based learning services, as well as supporting parents to stay at home with their young children. Respondents felt that home-base has largely been overlooked in the draft Plan, and advocate that in-home care is hugely beneficial for children. This was also echoed in concerns that too many children are spending too much time within large early learning services, or starting to attend them from a much younger age. These respondents would like to see more effort given to providing broader social supports to enable parents to stay home with their children.

A lack of focus on health outcomes for children

Respondents would like to see a greater emphasis on learner health, particularly nutrition. The draft Plan was applauded for its focus on health and wellbeing for both teachers and learners, including addressing ratios and centre size in order to reduce stress. However, respondents feel the Plan could go further in terms of addressing the quality of food provided by early learning



centres, and by providing families with information and advice on quality nutrition. This “health literacy” was strongly advocated as a means of supporting learners to live a healthy life, both while in education and at home.

“Early life nutrition is an important learning stage for children, allowing them to gain an understanding of food, nutrients, their bodies and how they grow. It can also serve as a good tool to teach fundamental skills regarding texture, taste, and experience”.

A lack of vision regarding establishing a public system, and tensions between ownership models

Respondents expressed concern at the lack of focus on shifting the sector away from a privatised, profit-focused system. There was a strong push from the sector towards building a public early childhood education system. Respondents want to see a decrease in the number of for-profit, chain centres, which the respondents view as not having sufficient focus on delivering a quality early learning service.

Also related to this point was a conversation about the ownership of centres. Respondents felt that the draft Plan has a heavy focus on the ownership of centres (private or community-owned, and contains an inherent bias in favour of community-owned centres. These respondents would like to see the Plan move away from a focus on ownership structures, and instead invite all providers into the fold to generate solutions to the problems in the sector, and to see the Plan become truly child-focused.

A greater focus on digital equity for children and teachers

Respondents felt that there need to be a focus on ensuring all children have opportunities, including access, to engage in appropriate digital learning. In addition, all teachers have access to appropriate learning opportunities to ensure this and to support their professional development.



Easier and timely access to learning support.

This is discussed in the earlier section on wrap-around services (page 20). A significant number of respondents expressed concern at their current lack of access to early learning support and the need for clearer links to the government's Learning Support Action Plan.



PRIORITY RANKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Respondents were asked to identify which recommendations they felt would make the greatest difference to the sector. Respondents ranked their top three recommendations, in order of priority. Table 1 shows the priority given to each recommendation. Recommendations are ordered by total priority ranking.

Table 1: Priority ranking of recommendations

Goal	Recommendation	Priority ranking				Proportion			
		One	Two	Three	TOTAL	One	Two	Three	TOTAL
Goal 1	Regulate new adult:child ratios for infants and toddlers	799	414	186	1,399	36%	18%	8%	62%
Goal 1	Incentivise for 100% and regulate for 80% qualified teachers in teacher-led centres, leading to regulation for 100%	406	347	188	941	18%	15%	8%	42%
Goal 3	Improve the consistency and levels of teacher salaries and conditions across the early learning sector	270	249	260	779	12%	11%	12%	35%
Goal 1	Prevent low quality service providers from opening additional services	116	187	245	548	5%	8%	11%	24%
Goal 1	Develop advice on group size, the design of physical environments and environmental factors	53	163	170	386	2%	7%	8%	17%
Goal 1	Require early learning services to support secure and consistent relationships for children	111	129	124	364	5%	6%	6%	16%



Goal	Recommendation	Priority ranking				Proportion			
Goal 2	Ensure equity funding supports children who need it	65	96	135	296	3%	4%	6%	13%
Goal 3	Strengthen Initial Teacher Education	42	80	97	219	2%	4%	4%	10%
Goal 3	Improve professional learning and development	20	66	115	201	1%	3%	5%	9%
		One	Two	Three	TOTAL	One	Two	Three	TOTAL
Goal 1	Increase monitoring of services	32	59	109	200	1%	3%	5%	9%
Goal 2	Expand the number of early learning services that facilitate wrap-around social services to support children and their whānau	28	60	62	150	1%	3%	3%	7%
Goal 4	Develop and introduce a process to determine whether a new early learning service is needed	24	43	66	133	1%	2%	3%	6%
Goal 3	Develop a workforce supply strategy	34	29	49	112	2%	1%	2%	5%
Goal 4	Co-design an appropriate funding model with the Playcentre Federation	49	15	27	91	2%	1%	1%	4%
Goal 1	Gazette Te Whāriki to support shared expectations	10	25	41	76	0%	1%	2%	3%
Goal 5	Support early learning services to collaborate with other education services	5	22	43	70	0%	1%	2%	3%
Goal 2	Co-construct progress tools to support children's learning and wellbeing	8	23	31	62	0%	1%	1%	3%
Goal 5	Support robust internal evaluation to ensure ongoing improvement	7	20	30	57	0%	1%	1%	3%
Goal 4	Provide governance and management support for community-owned services	12	15	29	56	1%	1%	1%	2%
Goal 5	Establish innovation hubs for early learning services	8	16	30	54	0%	1%	1%	2%



Goal	Recommendation		Priority ranking				Proportion		
Goal 4	Co-design an appropriate funding model with Te Kōhanga National Trust	8	21	13	42	0%	1%	1%	2%
Goal 4	Consider setting up state-owned early learning services with an associated research programme	11	13	17	41	0%	1%	1%	2%
Goal 4	Support the establishment and maintenance of early learning services on Crown land administered by the Ministry of Education	2	10	21	33	0%	0%	1%	1%



APPENDIX 1: AGREEMENT WITH PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Table 2: Detailed agreement with Goal 1 recommendations

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1.1 Regulate new adult:child ratios for infants and toddlers	1,788	79%	352	16%	59	3%	35	2%	8	0.4%	14	1%
1.2 Require early learning services to support secure and consistent relationships for children	1,763	78%	409	18%	47	2%	10	0.4%	3	0.1%	21	1%
1.3 Incentivise for 100% and regulate for 80% qualified teachers in teacher-led centres by 2022, leading to regulation for 100%	1,385	61%	523	23%	140	6%	133	6%	58	3%	15	1%
1.4 Develop advice on group size, the design of physical environments, and environmental factors	1,463	65%	609	27%	136	6%	17	1%	5	0.2%	23	1%
1.5 Gazette Te Whāriki (the early learning curriculum) to support shared expectations.	1,068	47%	757	34%	313	14%	50	2%	26	1%	37	2%
1.6 Prevent low quality service providers from opening additional services	1,909	85%	240	11%	63	3%	8	0.4%	14	1%	15	1%
1.7 Increase monitoring of services	1,208	54%	715	32%	226	10%	62	3%	15	1%	26	1%

Note



n=2,264

Table 3: Detailed agreement with Goal 2 recommendations

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
2.1 Ensure equity funding supports children who need it	1,621	73%	533	24%	58	3%	14	1%	4	0.2%	0	0%
2.2 Co-construct progress tools to support children's learning and wellbeing	995	45%	741	34%	337	15%	87	4%	50	2%	0	0%
2.3 Expand the number of early learning services that facilitate wrap-around social services to support children and their whānau	1,183	53%	706	32%	251	11%	57	3%	18	1%	0	0%

Note

n=2,210 – 2,230

Table 4: Detailed agreement Goal 3 recommendations

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
3.1 Improve the consistency and levels of teacher salaries and conditions across the early learning sector	1,830	82%	301	13%	59	3%	13	1%	6	0.3%	21	1%



	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
3.2 Strengthen Initial Teacher Education	1,501	67%	530	24%	149	7%	17	1%	4	0.2%	31	1%
3.3 Improve professional learning and development	1,537	69%	545	24%	108	5%	5	0.2%	2	0.1%	33	1%
3.4 Develop a workforce supply strategy	1,346	60%	622	28%	199	9%	12	1%	8	0.4%	45	2%

Note

n=2,264

Table 5: Detailed agreement Goal 4 recommendations

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
4.1 Develop and introduce a process to determine whether a new early learning service is needed	1,326	59%	534	24%	252	11%	57	3%	18	1%	42	2%
4.2 Provide governance and management support for community-owned services	1,124	50%	692	31%	314	14%	50	2%	13	1%	37	2%
4.3 Support the establishment and maintenance of early learning services on Crown land administered by the Ministry of Education	880	39%	601	27%	533	24%	93	4%	63	3%	61	3%
4.4 Co-design an appropriate funding model with Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust	883	40%	681	31%	537	24%	58	3%	19	1%	52	2%
4.5 Co-design an appropriate funding model with the NZ Playcentre Federation	838	38%	658	30%	587	26%	67	3%	26	1%	53	2%



	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
4.6 Consider setting up state-owned early learning services with an associated research programme	715	32%	591	27%	588	26%	166	7%	110	5%	59	3%

Note

n=2,264

Table 6: Detailed agreement with Goal 5 recommendations

	Strongly agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Blank	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
5.1 Establish innovation hubs for early learning services	919	41%	806	36%	396	18%	48	2%	23	1%	42	2%
5.2 Support early learning services to collaborate with other education services	1,222	55%	770	34%	172	8%	23	1%	8	0.4%	38	2%
5.3 Support robust internal evaluation to ensure ongoing improvement	1,187	53%	800	36%	171	8%	25	1%	4	0.2%	43	2%

Note

n=2,264



