

Early childhood education services in 2007: key findings from the NZCER national survey

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Introduction

This second NZCER national survey of teachers, managers, parents, and committee members in licensed early childhood education (ECE) services in New Zealand was undertaken in 2007, mid-way through the implementation of the strategic plan for early childhood education, *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki* (Ministry of Education, 2002).¹ ECE has experienced considerable changes since our first national survey in 2003. Teacher qualification requirements for teacher-led services have been raised and incentives offered for staff to become registered teachers, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has published assessment, self-review, and ICT resources and offered professional development contracts to support the curriculum, and a new funding system based on cost drivers has been implemented. Up to 20 hours a week of Free ECE for three- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led services was offered from July 2007. This survey provides some evidence about how changes are being experienced by ECE participants, and the main issues and challenges confronting ECE services.

The NZCER surveys go to a representative sample of about 15 percent of licensed ECE services, stratified by type and educational region. In October 2007, we sent surveys to 601 ECE services. Overall, there was at least one response from 53 percent of the services sampled. There was some under-representation in the responses of home-based, kōhanga reo, and privately owned ECE services, and some over-representation of kindergarten, playcentre, and isolated ECE services. Response rates were 45 percent parents, 43 percent teachers, 39 percent committee members, and 37 percent management. This snapshot gives a short overview of ECE services in 2007. Two in-depth reports are also available, one focused on assessment practices and curriculum resources², and the other on ECE provision, including funding and staffing, and parental perceptions.³

In late 2007, we found the sector largely in good heart, particularly in relation to teacher morale, and the introduction of free ECE. Where there has been policy work that has changed resources for ECE services, parents, and teachers, we see some positive gains. Teachers are reporting gains in fostering children's learning and involving families from using MOE assessment resources.

¹ Ministry of Education. (2002). *Pathways to the future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki*. Wellington: Author.

² Mitchell, L. (2008a). *Assessment practices and curriculum resources in early childhood education. Results of the 2007 NZCER national survey for ECE services*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

³ Mitchell, L. (2008b). *Provision of Early Childhood Education services and parental perceptions. Results of the 2007 NZCER national survey of ECE services*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Parents report much more involvement in assessment processes for their own child than they did in 2003, and they are also somewhat more discerning about the information they would like.

Free ECE for three- and four-year-olds in teacher-led services is having positive effects for children and families using free provision—benefiting family budgets, enabling some children to participate for longer hours, and enabling some parents to participate in study or paid employment or have more time for family and other responsibilities. Education and care centre sustainability appears to be greater where Free ECE has encouraged full rolls. Parents continue to express a high level of satisfaction with the quality of their ECE service. Committee members are reporting gains for their ECE service and for themselves from their contributions.

The main challenges for services and policy makers continue to be found in:

- meeting a diversity of parent needs at the local level, sometimes resulting in oversupply in some areas, and undersupply in others
- recruiting and retaining qualified staff, raising some questions about employment conditions and variations between ECE services as well as issues of teacher supply.

The issues that people identified were mostly particular to their own services and had changed little since 2003. Education and care service respondents were still concerned about recruiting and retaining registered teachers, and these teachers wanted better pay and noncontact time (although this had improved from 2003). Administrative workloads and the perceived loss of children to services offering Free ECE dominated playcentre respondents' views, although parents themselves did not report moving from playcentre to get free ECE. Kindergarten respondents were concerned with poor staff:child ratios, large group sizes, and workload (teachers), and respondents from home-based services wanted better pay and funding. The small number of kōhanga reo respondents were concerned with workload, and kaiako wanted more professional development and noncontact time.

Parents

In choosing an ECE service, 75 percent of parents thought they had enough information about the different types of service that were available to them. The information that most other parents would have liked was information about all ECE services in the community, age groups in different services and costs of different services. Most parents got information about the quality of ECE services, they could use by “word of mouth”. However, more were getting information from other sources than they were in 2003: 46 percent visited the ECE services (up from 31 percent in 2003), and a quarter read Education Review Office (ERO) reports (up from 17 percent in 2003). Twenty-six percent of parents felt they did not get enough information about the quality of ECE services they might use. Many of these parents would have liked a pamphlet or prospectus from each service in their locality, and some would have liked encouragement to visit, and open days.

The most important characteristics parents looked for in a good ECE service were affective and relational characteristics—that the children were happy and settled, adults were warm and nurturing, and communication with parents and whānau was good. Parents also rated high standards of health and safety and high numbers of teachers/educators to children as very important. Qualified teachers were rated as very important characteristics by most kindergarten and education and care parents, and “a good reputation” was rated as a very important characteristic by most kindergarten parents.

Seventy-seven percent of parents said ECE services were “affordable” or “very affordable”. Kōhanga reo and education and care parents were more likely than other parents to have some difficulties in meeting costs. Very few parents rated their service as “barely affordable”.

Twenty-four percent of parents would like to use more hours of ECE than they were currently using. Most of these wanted three to nine more hours per week. The main reasons why more hours were not being used were that the ECE service did not provide the hours wanted (especially kindergartens) or they were too expensive. Kindergarten parents were also more likely than other parents to state that the times their child attended did not suit them. Parents wanting different times (10 percent) were most likely to want school hours and term breaks.

A small percentage of parents (11 percent) wanted to use a different service but could not. The main reasons were that there were no spare places or the service was too expensive.

A quarter of children were attending more than one ECE service—slightly higher than previous surveys. Home-based and playcentre children were more likely to attend more than one ECE service, similar to the pattern found in 2003. Half the parents using a combination of ECE services did so because they thought this was beneficial for their child.

When the survey was undertaken, Free ECE for three- and four-year-olds had recently been implemented in teacher-led services that opted in, and in some kōhanga reo. All the home-based services, most kindergartens, two-thirds of the education and care centres, and half the kōhanga reo were offering Free ECE.

Implementation of Free ECE had little effect on the type of service parents were using. A very few parents (14 out of 418) said they changed to a different service, or from two services to only one, or from one service to two. Five kindergarten children shifted to an education and care centre, four education and care children shifted to another education and care centre, two to a kindergarten and one to a playcentre;⁴ one playcentre child shifted to another playcentre; and one playcentre child shifted to an education and care centre. This contrasts with fears expressed by some committee members that parents will shift to other service types, and views of playcentre parent management that playcentre children are leaving playcentre for other services offering Free ECE. However, it is early days in the implementation of Free ECE.

⁴ Note: Playcentres are not funded to offer free ECE so there may have been another reason for this shift.

Free ECE has been accompanied by small changes in hours of participation in ECE and how parents use their time: 15 percent of parents in services offering Free ECE increased the hours their child attended, and 19 percent said they had more time for family responsibilities. A small percentage of parents increased their hours of paid employment (6 percent), started paid work (1 percent), or enrolled in study (4 percent).

Almost all families made savings because of Free ECE. Half the parents accessing Free ECE from education and care centres were saving more than \$40 per week. Parents said the biggest effect of Free ECE was a positive impact on family finances. Parents also commented on greater accessibility to ECE and a positive impact on family lives.

There was a large positive shift in parental involvement in assessment and planning from 2003. Eighty percent of parents were involved in 2007, compared with 53 percent in 2003. A lower percentage than other service types were home-based and kōhanga reo parents. Many parents were taking their child's assessment portfolios home and providing home stories for the portfolio. The 2007 survey was undertaken after publication of *Kei Tua o te Pae. Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars* (Ministry of Education, 2005)⁵ which emphasised the importance of families being part of the assessment and evaluation of the curriculum and of children's learning and development.

Perhaps because of this involvement, 32 percent of parents wanted more information about their child than they were getting, and this was higher than in 2003 (18 percent). The main information parents would like was ideas about how to support their child's learning, more detailed information about their child's progress, and more regular reports and information about assessment for their child's learning.

On the whole, parents see good communication and involvement of them in planning for their child's learning as much more important than being involved in ECE service management or helping in the ECE service.

A majority of parents rated levels of government funding and the quality of teachers as very important issues for their service.

The worst thing about ECE services in parents' views was the cost. Kindergarten parents, who pay less, were less likely to rate this as the worst aspect.

Overwhelmingly, parents were satisfied with their ECE service: 93 percent rated their overall satisfaction level as "good" or "very good". Parents from teacher-led services thought qualities of the staff were the best thing about their ECE service. Playcentre parents thought parental involvement with their child's learning was the best thing, and kōhanga reo parents identified a combination of characteristics: qualities of the staff, parent involvement with their child's learning, and language and culture learning.

⁵ Ministry of Education. (2005). *Kei Tua o te Pae. Assessment for learning: Early childhood exemplars*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Parent committee members/whānau management

On average, committee members/whānau management spent 2.7 hours per week on ECE committee work. At the high end, 8 percent of committee members were averaging seven hours a week or more on ECE service work. The average hours were highest for playcentre office holders (3.5 hours) and kōhanga reo whānau (4.3 hours).

Consistent with spending more hours on ECE service work, playcentre and kōhanga reo respondents were also more likely to rate the overall amount of responsibility as “too much”—38 percent of playcentre respondents, and four of six kōhanga reo respondents, compared with 10 percent of education and care and of kindergarten respondents. The main things playcentre and kōhanga reo respondents would like to change was to reduce workload and paperwork. High levels of volunteer administration workload in playcentre have been found to be problematic in another recent study (Mitchell, Royal Tangaere, Mara, & Wylie, 2006)⁶ and in NZCER’s first national survey (Mitchell & Brooking, 2007).⁷

Overall, around half the committee members would like more support from other parents. The Government does not contract any organisation to provide training for committee members in ECE, or to offer advice and support. This situation contrasts with the school sector. A third of respondents received no formal training or support for their role, and 28 percent would like more knowledge or training. Where formal support was received, the most common form was an information kit (especially playcentre and kindergarten respondents), followed by a one-off session or seminar focused on a particular role. Committee members were generally positive about the formal support they did receive. Committee members were most likely to receive informal advice and support from other committee members (58 percent) and from ECE service staff (40 percent). A minority would like to get paid for committee work (17 percent) and to receive more support from the MOE (17 percent).

Most committee members in all service types (66 percent) regarded financial decision making as an important element of their role. There were service type differences in other roles rated as important. Education and care, playcentre, and kōhanga reo respondents were more likely to rate governance roles (strategic planning, policy development, and reviewing service performance) as important, while kindergarten committee members were more likely to rate fundraising and organising working bees as important. Perhaps the difference is because many of the ECE governance roles are played by kindergarten association councils rather than kindergarten committees. Education and care service committee members (43 percent) and kōhanga reo whānau management (four of six) regarded their role in recruiting/employing staff as important.

⁶ Mitchell, L., Royal Tangaere, A., Mara, D., & Wylie, C. (2006). *Quality in parent/whānau-led services*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

⁷ Mitchell, L., & Brooking, K. (2007). *First NZCER national survey of early childhood education services*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

The reasons for serving on the committee or management were predominantly philanthropic, to help children and contribute to community. However, around a third of parents wanted to gain something for themselves—to meet other parents and gain skills. Most parents surveyed did gain from their committee/management work, especially increased understanding of the ECE programme, seeing improvements for children, and the satisfaction of making a contribution. Friendship and social support was another common positive gain.

Most committee members had consulted with parents in the last year, mostly in informal discussion with parents who were also their friends. Formal consultation was mainly through newsletters, and meetings. Playcentre and kōhanga reo were more likely than other services to consult through meetings. Funding, policies, excursions, and property were the main areas of consultation. Most committee members did not know the percentage of parents who participated in community consultation, or did not answer our question about levels of participation. Playcentre committee members reported the highest levels of consultation with parents, and kindergartens reported the lowest levels. Playcentre committee members were also the most satisfied with their level of contact with parents.

Nineteen percent of services had consulted with a local Māori community in the last year. Kōhanga reo had had extensive consultation with local iwi, marae, hapū, community leaders, and Māori parents. Other services had mainly consulted with Māori parents. The most common topics of consultation were te reo Māori in the programme and inclusion of local history in the curriculum. Kōhanga reo were more likely to consult over all issues and curriculum.

Few services had consulted with other communities.

Only 10 percent of committee members thought there were issues around consultation, although 30 percent were unsure, suggesting some uncertainty about the roles of committees in community consultation. The main consultation issues identified were lack of connection to the community, uncertainty about how to consult, a view that the committee did not need to consult, and time pressures.

Most committee members rated the level of government funding as a very important issue. Yet less than half the committee members said they understood the basis for MOE funding (education and care and kōhanga reo respondents were more likely to state they understood this).

Free ECE had an impact on enrolments, according to committee members. Education and care respondents were more likely to comment on now having full rolls, more children on the waiting list, and a reduced cost for families. Playcentre respondents commented on decreased rolls, and children moving to other ECE services. Kindergarten respondents were more likely to report improved income, less fundraising, and a reduced cost for families. Kōhanga reo responses were mixed (but very small numbers).

Other major issues identified as very important by most committee members varied according to service type: the quality of teachers and the availability of teachers for education and care services; staff:child ratios and the quality of teachers for kindergartens; volunteer workloads and

retaining families for playcentres; and staff:child ratios, group size, and retaining families for kōhanga reo (small numbers).

Management

Funding was also a major issue for most managers. Fifty percent of respondents said funding was not enough to meet their service needs, but only 16 percent of services were in deficit in the last financial year (21 percent in 2003). Most thought their financial position was better than three years ago (46 percent, some of whom had improved their financial position by reducing costs) or about the same (23 percent).

Most education and care and home-based management understood the basis for government funding. Only about half the playcentre parent management and kindergarten head teachers said they understood it, but this is likely to be because their associations handle some or most of the financial responsibility. Kōhanga reo responses were mixed (low numbers).

Of services offering Free ECE for three- and 4-year-olds, all day services were most likely to offer 20 hours a week. All home-based services and 89 percent of education and care centres were offering 20 hours per week for both age groups. Thirty-one percent of kindergartens and one kōhanga reo were offering 20 hours for three-year-olds, and 46 percent of kindergartens and half the kōhanga reo were offering 20 hours for four-year-olds. Forty-six percent of education and care centres, two of 10 home-based schemes, and 18 percent of kindergartens asked for optional charges. Many charged for excursions. Education and care centres were also likely to charge for additional staffing (above regulated ratios) and resources.

Free ECE had been associated with changes in participation according to half the managers. The main patterns of changes were service-type specific:

- more child enrolments, children attend for longer hours, and children attend more regularly (education and care)
- more child enrolments, children attend for longer hours, and children shifted to this ECE service (home-based)
- children shifted from playcentre to an ECE service offering Free ECE (playcentre)
- fewer child enrolments (kindergarten)
- no changes (kōhanga reo).

Most services, except kindergartens and kōhanga reo, were staffed at higher levels than the regulated requirements, although 27 percent of managers said they “sometimes struggled” to meet regulated requirements (none of these were home-based). Their main difficulties were the nonavailability of relievers.

There was pressure for more child places: 24 percent of managers with under two-year-olds wanted more places for this age group, and 19 percent with over two-year-olds wanted more

places for that age group. Most services catering for under two-year-olds did not have any spare places; and only a third of those catering for over two-year-olds have spare places.

Many services had changed their operation in the last two years (39 percent). The most common changes were to increase the session length and to open on more days per week. The most common reasons for change were addressing community need and a response to providing Free ECE. These findings can be seen alongside parent survey findings that 24 percent of current parents wanted to use more hours.

Kindergartens, kōhanga reo, and education and care services had the most stable rolls in terms of children staying until they went to school.

Eighty-four percent of managers said children were attending their ECE service regularly. As in 2003, kindergartens and playcentres reported more irregular attendance than other services. The main reasons for irregular attendance were reported to be children's poor health, bad weather, and parental needs.

Teacher turnover in ECE services was still high:

- Of services employing paid staff, 66 percent had one or more teacher leave in the last 12 months (62 percent in 2003).
- The average turnover rate per service was 23 percent.

Teachers report that their main reason for moving to their current ECE service was to improve employment conditions; they also moved for personal reasons, and to improve their pay. Seventy-six percent of teachers/educators regarded their work as a long-term career, but only 54 percent imagined themselves in an ECE teaching position in five years time. There was a high level of uncertainty (19 percent of teachers/educators were "not sure" what they would be doing).

Most education and care centres (71 percent) and home-based services (73 percent) had difficulties in recruiting and retaining suitable and qualified teaching staff. The main reasons for these difficulties were a limited number of suitable applicants, and competition from other ECE services that paid more. Education and care centres also said that a main reason for recruitment difficulties was that there were no qualified applicants. Thirty percent of all the ECE service managers responding said they had no applications from qualified teachers.

A small percentage of education and care centre managers said staff had difficulties in becoming registered because they did not understand the registration process (7 percent) and/or were unable to access a registration supervisor (3 percent). Twenty percent of education and care centre managers predicted difficulties in meeting the 2008 requirement for 50 percent of their regulated staff to be registered teachers.

Education and care managers were also more likely than others to experience difficulties in meeting the staff hours count requirement for their funding rate. Forty-two percent had difficulties. The main difficulties were in covering for teachers on leave, on professional development, during breaks, and on field-based training.

In managers' views, more time was being spent on management, especially administration, but also on aspects more directly related to children's learning, review, and strategic planning, in the last three years.

Most kōhanga reo, home-based, and education and care services employed an administrator. Only two of the 36 playcentres responding employed an administrator, although funding was provided in the May 2006 Budget to help playcentres reduce the time spent on administration.

Funding was a major issue for most managers. Other issues reflected the operation and pressures on specific service types: staff: child ratios, group size, teacher workloads, and teacher quality for kindergartens; teacher quality and availability of registered teachers for education and care centres; volunteer workload for playcentres; and language fluency and support staff funding and professional development for kōhanga reo.

Teachers/educators

Over 90 percent of teachers/educators enjoyed their work. Most were positive about the support they got to do their job, their opportunities for learning, and their treatment. Morale levels were high, with 80 percent saying their morale was "good" or "very good". ECE teacher morale was slightly higher than in 2003, and higher than for primary and secondary teachers.

Fifty-nine percent of teachers/educators thought their workload was fair or manageable, and 56 percent that their work and personal life was balanced. Most other teachers were neutral about workload and work/life balance. Most teachers put in extra hours outside paid work time, mainly up to six hours per week. But 18 percent were putting in 7–10 additional hours per week, and 10 percent were working longer than this. Kindergarten teachers reported higher hours of unpaid work time, with 41 percent doing seven or more hours per week extra. Kindergarten teachers were more likely than others to disagree that their work and life were balanced, and that their workload was fair.

Forty-two percent of teachers were interested in holding a supervisor, co-ordinator, or head teacher position—mainly to advance their career, address a challenge, and implement ideas they had. Home-based educators were less likely to want to hold such a position. Kindergarten teachers were more likely to say their workload was too high, or the work too stressful as reasons for not wanting a higher position.

Over half the teachers had moved to their current ECE service from a different ECE service. The most common reason for moving within teacher-led services was because of better employment conditions in the current ECE service. Most teachers in teacher-led services regarded their work in ECE as a long-term career. Most were not thinking of leaving their job in the next year.

Most teachers were using credit modes of assessment that focus on what children can do, especially photographs, conversations with children, and narrative learning stories that could be used in a range of ways to analyse teaching and learning. Most were consulting with parents and

discussing data with other teachers. The use made of learning stories (94 percent) was greater than in 2003 (78 percent), perhaps because of the focus on narrative assessment within *Kei Tua o te Pae. Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars*. Kōhanga reo kaiako were less likely than others to use learning stories (but the numbers responding were low). Similar to the use teachers made of assessment data in 2003, the main usage for the data collected was to provide feedback to parents, monitor children's progress, and develop relevant programmes for individuals and groups. In 2007, more use was being made of data for evaluating practice (76 percent, 2007; 61 percent, 2003) and providing feedback for children (71 percent, 2007; 62 percent, 2003).

Most teachers communicated with parents about their child's learning through informal contact and parents accessing children's assessment/profile book. Seventy-two percent of teachers had used the MOE resource, *Kei Tua o te Pae. Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars* (Ministry of Education, 2005), especially kindergarten teachers. Home-based, playcentre, and kōhanga reo educators used this resource less. Book 8 on assessment for infants and toddlers was used the least. Only 4 percent of teachers thought *Kei Tua o te Pae* had not offered them anything new. Many thought they were now better able to use assessment to foster children's learning and development, to involve families, and to understand theory.

The main ways in which teachers involved parents in teaching and learning processes was through parents accessing assessment portfolios, taking them home, and providing home stories and home resources. Fifty-five percent of teachers invited parents to participate in assessment and planning and 38 percent invited parents to help interpret data, but a majority of playcentre parents were involved in these ways.

The main way children were involved in their assessments was in revisiting their portfolios (84 percent). Thirty-five percent of teachers said children were using earlier work to judge later work, and 32 percent said children make their own judgements about their achievements.

Two-thirds of teachers thought there were barriers to assessing, documenting, planning, and evaluating in the way they would like to, mostly insufficient time, including noncontact time, during the working day.

ICT was being widely used to support children's learning, especially documenting learning, creating portfolios, and developing resources. ICT was also used for parent newsletters. Kindergarten children used ICT more extensively than children from other services, especially cameras to take photos, the Internet to find information, and computers for pattern and alphabet recognition and other games. Playcentre (19 percent) and home-based educators (21 percent) were more likely not to use ICT than other teachers.

Most teachers had participated in some professional development in the last 12 months, especially on teacher appraisal, assessment, te reo and tikanga Māori, evaluation, and children's behaviour. Fifty-nine percent of teachers had had 15 hours or more professional development. Over 90 percent of teachers agreed that this had helped them to actively reflect on their practice, given

them opportunities to try out teaching and learning practices, and encouraged new ways to engage children in learning.

As in 2003, teachers thought the most useful ideas for their teaching programme came informally from other teachers in their own ECE service. Courses and professional development, and reading and research literature were the next most useful sources of ideas. Stress management, children with special educational needs, ICT use, and children's behaviour were the most common areas of advice and information teachers felt they needed, but were missing out on.

Seventy percent of teachers said they had one or more children with special educational needs, and just over half said they were not receiving support but would like it, mostly for one to three children per service. The most useful advice, where it was received, came from working with parents to meet the child's needs, working with the MOE Group Special Education, and having an Education Support Worker in the ECE service.

The three types of advice and support that teachers said would be most helpful in working with children with special educational needs were Education Support Worker time, more specialist support, and better co-ordination with other agencies, e.g., health. Teachers made other comments about working with children with special educational needs, mainly related to the need for information to be shared between teaching staff and specialist staff, a long waiting time to receive specialist support for particular children, and the need for Education Support Worker time.

Conditions of employment varied by service type. Kindergarten teachers' annual leave and noncontact time provisions were the most generous, with the majority having six weeks or more annual leave, and six or more noncontact hours per week. Most education and care and kōhanga reo teachers had the statutory minimum annual leave entitlement of four weeks, and four hours or less noncontact time per week. But paid noncontact time had improved for education and care teachers—only 7 percent had no noncontact time in 2007, compared with 25 percent in 2003. Most teachers often used their noncontact time for assessment, planning, and evaluation.

Staff meetings were being held with about the same frequency in 2007 as in 2003. Thirty-one percent of teachers reported their service held them once a week and 25 percent once a fortnight. It was more common for playcentre meetings to be held once a month (53 percent) and kindergarten meetings to be held once a week (54 percent). Most kindergartens held staff meetings during noncontact time, and other services after work or in evenings.

One of the goals of the strategic plan is to support continuity in education, mainly through effective transition practices between ECE and school and linking ECE and family policy. Coherence of education is also improved when there are linkages between ECE settings where children use more than one ECE service. Thirty-eight percent of teachers did not know if children used more than one ECE service, and 59 percent said no such linkages existed. The most common relationship was an occasional phone call if something happened.

As in 2003, about a third of teachers said they had no or limited contact with local primary schools. But somewhat more teachers were sharing information about individual children—34

percent in 2007, 27 percent in 2003. Kindergarten teachers and kōhanga reo kaiako were more likely to do this. Perhaps the alignment of the curriculum strands in the new school curriculum with *Te Whāriki* strands will support teachers to build professional alliances.

The main things that teachers would like to change about their service reflected issues for specific service types. Top priorities for change for education and care teachers were better pay, more noncontact time and time to reflect, plan, and share ideas. Kindergarten teachers wanted smaller group sizes, improved ratios, and reduced administration and paperwork. Priorities for playcentre educators were Free ECE for all children, more funding, and reduced administration and paperwork. Home-based educators wanted more funding and better pay. Kōhanga reo kaiako wanted better professional development, more noncontact time, and time to reflect, plan, and share ideas.

Teachers' main achievements were improvements in their knowledge, skills, and teaching practice, improved assessment, planning, and evaluation practices, and creating more positive learning environments.