Evaluation of the Home-School Partnership: Literacy Programme

Report prepared for Ministry of Education

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Executive summary

This report presents the findings from an evaluation carried out in 2006–7 on the Home-school Partnerships: Literacy programme (HSP:L). This programme was designed to meet one of the Ministry of Education's priorities to strengthen children's learning and achievement by involving parents in their learning. It began as a Pasifika initiative by engaging parents in their children's literacy learning by offering sessions in their first language, but has since been broadened in concept to involve all parents in a school's community.

The focus of the evaluation was concerned with four key aspects of the HSP:L programme:

- How schools went about implementing the programme;
- The nature of the partnerships between parents/whänau and schools that have evolved as a result of the HSP:L programme;
- The literacy impacts of the programme on students, parent's understandings, and teacher's literacy programmes; and
- Issues concerning sustainability of home-school partnerships in schools that have completed the programme.

The process of evaluation included interviewing focus groups of teachers, parents and students at six case study schools, as well as lead parents, lead teachers and principals to obtain qualitative, in-depth information. As well, quantitative data was obtained from a national survey which was sent to all the schools that had been involved in the HSP:L programme since 2001. This combined approach has enabled an evaluation of the big picture of the HSP:L field, as well as a closer examination of the issues that have emerged.

Key findings emerged from each of the aspects of the evaluation.

1. Implementation

The programme as it was originally designed, was very successful in schools that targeted their Pacific parents.

When schools invited all their parents, those that considered and catered for their unique community needs and contexts in the implementation of the programme, were more satisfied with the results, than those who followed the set session format in the resource folder.

Strongly committed lead teams were essential to the success of the programme.

Whole-school and whole-family approaches was more likely to produce transforming effects, both in participation rates and literacy impacts.

Time was the most important resource needed for the success of this programme. Parents' time and teachers' time were both important and needed to be carefully aligned.

'Hooking' parents into the programme required some creative strategies, but involving students in those strategies seemed to have the most effect.

Grouping parents into ethnic or language groups was counter-productive in some schools when all parents were invited. Parents were more likely to feel comfortable if they were given choices about joining groups, and often their children's year group seemed to be the most effective.

2. Partnership

The HSP:L programme has high potential to form effective bicultural and multicultural partnerships with schools, because of the focus on first languages and the essential lead parent role embedded in the design.

The majority of schools (85 percent) were positive about the partnerships with parents/whänau they have established through the programme.

Triangulation of the data, revealed this 'partnership' to be mainly a one-way process of parents learning from the lead teacher about literacy practices. Teachers do not appear to be learning a great deal from parents about children's home literacy practices.

An approach which involves sharing of information, genuine learning from each other, and 'joint endeavour' as advocated by Timperley and Robinson (2002) would seem to be necessary to bring about the shift in thinking required by teachers to bring about the kind of partnership likely to impact positively on student achievement.

3. Literacy impacts

The successes of the HSP:L programme on literacy were:

- Eighty percent of schools reported parental involvement had a positive impact on children's opportunity to learn; and
- Approximately three quarters of the surveyed schools reported that it had a minor positive impact on student's engagement, attitudes, confidence and literacy achievement.

In spite of the promising findings, there are still some challenges within the programme to bring about greater literacy impacts. These were identified as:

- Increasing the confidence of parents to engage with session leaders about their home literacy practices;
- Shifting teachers' thinking so that they realise the importance of learning from parents about children's home literacy experiences and practices; and
- Increasing teachers' abilities to incorporate students' out-of-school literacy experiences into classroom programmes and practices.

4. Sustainability

Three quarters of the schools reported sustaining some aspect of the HSP programme in subsequent initiatives.

The main barriers reported by the remaining 25 percent of schools appeared to be school constraints such as time and funding, rather than parental enthusiasm.

School Support Services advisors were a key factor in scaffolding lead teams to work with parents, and advisors with ESOL/Literacy backgrounds were able to provide essential expertise in this respect.

Three factors emerged which appear to be critical to continued sustainability of home-school partnerships:

- Modifications to the resource folder;
- Time and funding resources to run the programme; and
- Linking the HSP framework to all other professional development initiatives.

1. Introduction

This report provides an evaluation of the home-school partnership: literacy programme carried out in 2006–7 by the New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) for the Ministry of Education (MOE).

Home-school partnership literacy programme

The Home School Partnership (HSP) Programme is an initiative designed to achieve one of the three priorities of the Ministry of Education's Schooling Strategy 2005–2010. Its specific purpose is to strengthen children's learning and achievement by involving parents in their learning. It was originally developed as a Pasifika initiative involving parents in their children's literacy learning by offering sessions at their schools in their first language. The programme has since been extended to involve all students, families, and whänau, and caters for a diverse range of first languages, as well as English. The programme is premised on the BES research evidence (Biddulph and Biddulph, 2003), which indicates that family and community influences account for 40–65 percent of children's learning.

The Home School Partnership Literacy (HSP:L) programme is designed for schools who have recently completed in-depth literacy professional development. It is based on principles of cultural inclusion and partnership in schools and involves a lead team of teachers training lead parents, some of whom may be bi-lingual, to work with parents from the school community. The aim is for parents and teachers to share strategies of literacy practices at both home and school, to support children's increased literacy involvement and achievement. Lead teachers receive training and support from experienced School Support Services (SSS) literacy co-ordinators to implement the programme and help the lead parents run a series of six sessions for parents and families from their schools. These sessions cover key messages of literacy and pedagogy, and are, where appropriate, conducted in the first language(s) of the groups of parents attending.

The aims of the Home-School Partnership Programme: Literacy are to:

- Reinforce the fact that parents and families are one of the greatest influences on children's learning and are essential to their success at school;
- Endorse what families and teachers are already doing for children's literacy development;
- Share ways in which families and teachers working together can make an even greater impact on children's literacy development;
- Increase parents, and families understanding of key literacy messages and practical ways of helping children learn;

- Establish a caring working partnership between school staff and the community; and
- Welcome into the school community parent groups who may have been difficult to engage previously.

The focus of the evaluation is concerned with four key aspects of the HSP:L programme:

- How schools went about implementing the programme;
- The nature of the partnerships between parents/whänau and schools that have evolved as a result of the HSP:L programme;
- What literacy impacts the programme has had on students, parent's understandings, and teacher's literacy programmes; and
- Issues concerning sustainability of home-school partnerships in schools that have done the programme.

Methodology

Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used to collect data for this evaluation. A survey was sent to all schools who had been involved in the HSP:L programme since 2001, and a case study approach (Yin 1994) was used with focus group interviews of lead teachers, lead parents, other teachers, parents who attended HSP:L, students and principals in six schools. Phone interviews were also used to collect data from School Support Services (SSS) personnel.

The survey reflects the views of the principal / lead teacher who filled it in, and while they comment on what they thought the impacts of the HSP:L programme were for parents and students, it needs to be remembered that these are not parent's and student's views being expressed. The results therefore reflect the interpretations of school personnel only, and may not necessarily be a valid description of the viewpoints of the groups who did not contribute to the survey. The case studies are a more in-depth explanation of the unique way six schools implemented the HSP:L programme, and this data includes the experiences of parents, students, teachers and lead teams. Given the inclusion in the case studies of the perspectives of all involved in the HSP:L, they give a more comprehensive overview than the survey findings.

The research questions

We co-developed the research questions with the Ministry of Education, and have attached as appendices the interview schedules for each focus group, the phone interviews for SSS managers and advisors, and the survey instrument. The negotiated research questions have been organised under the headings of each chapter – implementation, partnership, literacy impact and sustainability:

Table 1   **Summary of interview themes**

Implementation Research question	Instruments used for data collection
How do schools go about introducing and implementing the HSP programme within their own unique context?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents, and SSS advisors. Focus groups with other parents, other teachers. Survey (principal and lead teacher)
Partnership Research questions	**Instruments used for data collection**
How do schools conceptualise and build partnerships with their parents?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents, and SSS advisors. Focus group interviews with parent groups. Survey (principal and lead teacher).
In what ways is the programme impacting on parent/teacher relationships and the partnership between the school and parents/families? What kinds of relationships and partnerships are developing as a result of HSP?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents, and SSS advisors. Focus groups with other teachers and other parents. Survey (principal and lead teacher).
Literacy Impact Research Questions	**Instruments used for data collection**
What impact do the adult participants think parental involvement as a result of the HSP programme, has had on children's opportunities to learn?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents, and SSS advisors. Focus groups with other parents. Survey (principal and lead teacher).
How do adult participants perceive the programme to have impacted on students' literacy learning and achievement in and out of school, e.g., engagement, interest, enthusiasm?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents, and SSS advisors. Focus groups with other teachers and other parents. Survey (principal and lead teacher).
How do students view the impact of the HSP programme? What changes at home and school have occurred for them in terms of opportunities, how they feel about literacy experiences, their engagement, interest, and enthusiasm?	Focus groups with students.
Sustainability research questions	**Instruments used for data collection**
What is the nature of the organisational dynamic operating in schools that sustain literacy home-school partnerships?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents, and SSS advisors. Survey (principal and lead teacher).
What suggestions do schools have for modifying or building on the HSP resource folder to better meet teachers and school's needs to foster wider participation of parents in a wider range of their children's learning? e.g., A modular approach focused on particular levels or learning needs?	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents and SSS advisors. Focus group with other teachers. Survey (principal and lead teacher).
What suggestions do schools have about the support they receive from the SSS advisors, to modify, or help build improvements into the HSP	Interviews with principals, lead teachers, lead parents. Focus groups with other teachers and other parents.

Implementation Research question	Instruments used for data collection
framework/model?	Survey (principal and lead teacher).
What are SSS advisors' perceptions of the requirements of an effective HSP advisor and is the nature of the training and professional development sufficient to facilitate the development of an effective lead teacher/lead parent role and relationship?	Interviews with SSS advisors.
From SSS managers' and advisors' perception, what priority and level of support does the HSP programme receive in each of the six SSS regions? What are the specific barriers or enablers that may be operating at this level?	Interviews with SSS managers and SSS advisors.

Case studies

There were a limited number of schools to choose from in 2006, because less than 20 were involved in the HSP:L contract that year. We identified these schools with the help of the Ministry of Education, and chose a purposive sample which best represented a range of deciles, locations, sizes, ethnic groups and types of primary schools. The characteristics of the case study schools are shown in the following table.

Table 2   **Summary of characteristics of case study schools**

School	Decile	Type	Ethnicity of parent groups targeted
1	2	Contributing	All parents invited. Parents wanted to be mixed up – did not want first language groups
2	2	Contributing	Samoan, Tongan, cook Island Mäori, Mäori , Indian, Chinese
3	7	Contributing	All parents of new entrant children invited.
4	4	Full primary	Samoan
			Tongan
5	2	Contributing	All parents invited – grouped as: Mäori
			Samoan, Päkehä.
6	3	Contributing	All parents invited. Parents chose not to have separate Te Reo Mäori group.

Participant sample

We decided to ask school principals and lead teachers to help us select the participants for the focus groups, and asked that up to six people be invited. We sent our letters of invitation and introductory information and consent packs to each school and they handed them out to the people concerned. It was important to have students whose parents had attended the sessions in the student focus group for instance, and we found it helpful for school staff who knew the parents to approach them.

Other participants such as principals, lead teachers and lead parents as well as the SSS managers and advisors were invited directly.

Table 3 shows the number of participants in the case study focus groups at each school.

Table 3   **Participants at case study schools**

Case study schools	Principal	Lead Teachers	Teachers	Lead Parents	Parents	Students
1	1	4	2	4	3	4
2	1	4 plus a coordinator	5	4	7	5
3	1	1	1	1	2	2
4	1	2	10	3	6	6
5	1	3	3	3	3	2
6	2	1	-	2	3	5

Collection of school documents and school data

Documents were collected from each of the case study schools which demonstrated the array of resources they had generated to implement the HSP:L programme. These resources included training resources, parent invitations, newsletters, charts, media releases, etc. Many of these had been translated into a variety of Pasifika languages. Many of the newsletters and media releases included photographs of sessions with parents and students taking part in a variety of activities.

Pilot

We piloted our research instruments at the first case study school we visited. After a team review of reflecting on their effectiveness, some relatively minor changes were made.

Phone interviews with School Support Services advisors and managers

It was important to interview SSS advisors about their work with schools in the HSP:L programme in general, and also to discuss the level of support the SSS managers were providing for this programme in their regions. All six managers and advisors from the regions where there

were case study schools were interviewed by phone during the course of the evaluation. The interview schedules are appended at the end of the report.

Survey

One hundred and five schools who have participated in the HSP:L programme since it began were sent a survey. Forty-nine schools completed the survey, a 47 percent response rate.

Ten other schools responded to say they *did not complete* the survey for the following reasons:

- There had been staff changes since they did the HSP:L programme and no-one in the school knew about it (4 schools);
- They were over-committed with other contract/PD work and did not start the HSP:L programme (1 school);
- They were involved in the Numeracy HSP programme and had been sent this survey by mistake (2 schools);
- They did not complete the programme because of a falling roll and staff changes (1 school); and
- They could not get parent support (2 schools).

Schools have had the opportunity to take part in the HSP:L programme since 2001. The following table shows when the survey schools did the programme.

Table 4   **Years the schools took part in HSP:L**

Year	Number 49	%
2001	8	16
2002	12	25
2003	8	16
2004	13	27
2005	7	14
2006	15	31

The survey was completed mainly by principals (53 percent) and lead teachers (49 percent), and in 12 schools more than one person completed it together and at the same time.

Data analysis

The transcripts of all the focus group and phone interviews were analysed for themes related to the research questions, and the research team wrote summary reflections from the fieldwork visits. The survey data was coded and analysed by the Statistics and Data management team, and open-ended comments were coded by themes, which linked with the qualitative data from the

interviews. We then looked for patterns and discrepancies and analysed these in context, because each of the case study schools had adopted different approaches according to their school's idiosyncratic needs and circumstances.

Constraints of the data

While it could be argued that the findings discussed in this report are based on self-report, we found that we could triangulate the data by asking different groups the same questions, which does improve the reliability of the data. The use of focus groups also meant that individual viewpoints were often discussed and argued about within the group, which usually resulted in a more consistent or collectively agreed upon response. This was particularly evident in the student focus groups where it was not uncommon for students to disagree with an individual response, or where several students would back up a particular viewpoint.

Never-the-less, the main drawback of the data obtained from a case study approach is that because the HSP:L programme was implemented so differently in each school, it is difficult to make generalised statements about all schools. To a certain extent the survey data has helped counter that effect.

The second constraint about the data has already been raised in the methodology section, where the reader needs to be aware of which voices are interpreting some of the questions. The most authentic voices come from the participants in the case studies as these are individuals speaking about their experiences of the programme directly. In the survey, responses are from the person/s who filled in the survey – usually the principal or lead teacher. The results therefore reflect *their* interpretations only, and may not necessarily be a valid description of the viewpoints of the parent and student groups who did not contribute to the survey.

Consent and ethics

All case study participants in the evaluation were sent an introductory letter and information/consent pack before we arrived at the school, and consent forms were collected before or at interviews. We ensured we established good relationships with the school principal at each case study school and asked their advice about working with parents and children from different ethnic groups. In all cases the schools organised the focus groups for us according to times that best fitted into their busy timetables.

The survey was sent to schools with a covering letter inviting them to take part in the evaluation, but it was completely voluntary. No individuals or schools have been identified in the report.

No individual schools are identified, but in chapter 2 we give a case-by-case portrayal of the way each case study school implemented the HSP:L programme, because of the unique and distinctive way they did this. It was impossible to generalise this and important to tell each different story, to illustrate to other schools the different strategies it is possible to adopt. While each of these

schools will probably recognise themselves, we have made sure other schools will not recognise them.

Research team

The NZCER research team was made up of Dr Keren Brooking (research leader), Josie Roberts and Jonathan Fisher. Two members of the team visited each of the case study schools and conducted the focus group interviews over two days, to allow schools flexibility and to give parents opportunities to attend at times convenient to them. The research team analysed the qualitative data from the case study focus groups, and from that material identified questions for the survey. Simon Leong and Rachel Dingle helped in the survey design and then organised and analysed the completed data from the surveys.

Overview of the report structure

This report summarises the findings of the evaluation under four main headings: implementation; partnership; literacy impact; and sustainability. Chapter 2 describes how schools implemented the programme, including which parent groups they targeted and the various approaches they took. Chapter 3 describes the partnership relationships schools developed with their parent communities and evaluates the effectiveness of the way parents were involved in their children's learning. Chapter 4 discusses the literacy impact of the programme on parents, teachers, and children, and chapter 5 discusses the issues and challenges around sustaining a home-school partnership. The final chapter outlines the conclusions and recommendations derived from the evaluation.

2. Implementation

Introduction

This chapter considers how schools introduced and implemented the HSP programme within their unique context. This initial focus on the implementation process provides a background for understanding questions about partnership, impact, and sustainability covered in the following chapters.

The chapter is divided into 2 sections:

Section A covers aspects of implementation common to all the schools; and

Section B provides a brief summary of the different ways each of the case study schools implemented their own HSP:L programme.

In Section A the following aspects of implementation are described:

- The lead team;
- Beyond the lead team;
  (a) training,
  (b) the HSP:L resource folder;
- Attendance at sessions;
  – Facilitation style;
  – Parental involvement; and
  – Strategies to support parental attendance.

Section A: Aspects of implementation.

The lead team

The HSP:L resource folder (Ministry of Education 2003), suggests the lead team involve one programme co-ordinator plus as many additional lead teachers as is necessary to match lead parents one-for-one. The medians from the survey responses showed the most likely configuration was three lead teachers (often including an overall 'coordinator') and four lead parents. There was, however, quite a range. For example 20 percent of survey schools had only one lead teacher, while 12 percent had 6 or more. Compare this with lead parents, where only 4 percent of schools worked with one lead parent, but 12 percent had 6 or more.

Our six case study schools highlighted how important it is to have a strong lead team to ensure the successful delivery of HSP:L. Table 5 shows the main reasons for selecting members of the lead team. In most surveyed schools a combination of factors were often considered. More than half the schools indicated that at least six of the factors below had influenced their decisions, for both lead parents and teachers.

Table 5   **Reasons for selecting members of the lead team**

Reasons	Lead Parent(s) %	Lead Teacher(s) %
Their standing in the community	59	20
Their confidence or positive attitude	49	65
Their availability	74	45
Their ethnicity	86	49
They spoke a language other than English	82	33
Their facilitation skills	12	61
Their education or literacy expertise	8	67
Their parenting style/skills	27	8
Their ease in relating to a wide range of people	49	51
Their good relationships with teachers/the school	71	39
Their good relationships with parents	51	74
They volunteered	38	59

The five main influences on the selection of <u>lead teachers</u>, in descending order, were:

1. Their good relationship with parents;
2. Their education or literacy expertise;
3. Their confidence or positive attitude;
4. Their facilitation skills; and
5. They volunteered.

Lead teachers in the case studies were often shoulder tapped by the principal, or had been interested enough in HSP:L themselves to attend a SSS information session in the region. The lead teachers were then generally active in selecting and inviting lead parents to come on board. Sometimes a snowball approach was used to make the most of the networks of one particular parent. The five most compelling reasons for choosing particular lead parents according to survey responses were:

1. The ethnicity of the lead parent;
2. Their ability to speak a language other than English;
3. Their availability;

4. Their good relationship with the school, or individual teachers; and

5. Their standing in the community.

These match closely to the selection guidelines outlined in the resource folder. For example the first criterion is that a lead parent should be a "competent bicultural and bilingual person who is at ease both in English-speaking contexts and in the environment of their own language and culture" (Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 18). The list goes on to emphasis the importance of educational interest, good interpersonal skills, trusting relationships with other parent communities, and their ability to work with teachers.

Availability is the only reason not explicitly mentioned in the resource folder. However, the case studies showed us that all lead team members needed to invest in large amounts of time in training, preparing resources, maintaining relationships, and planning and delivering sessions. Very few of the lead parents we spoke with were in full time paid work.

Beyond the lead team

We were interested to know whether the HSP:L programme was run as a whole school programme with all the teachers involved in it. It was reassuring to find that 90 percent of surveyed schools said that the principal had attended or helped at an HSP session, even if they were not necessarily part of the lead team that ran the HSP:L sessions. This figure dropped to 80 percent for other teachers/teacher aides, and 76 percent for Board of Trustee members[1]. Other groups that were said to help run sessions in at least one school included: SSS advisors, refugee liaison officers and translators.

Table 6 **Involvement beyond the lead team**

	Principal %	Other teachers/ teacher aides %	Board of Trustees %
Only aware that HSP was running (no other involvement)	0	2	10
Given regular updates	76	80	84
Helped to invite parents to attend	65	76	16
Helped to plan or organise the programme	65	55	41
Attend and help at community sessions	92	80	76

At first glance these numbers suggest that schools have been following the advice from the resource folder that HSP:L should be run as a whole-school initiative (2003, p.17). However, we do not know the *proportion* of teachers that were involved in each way within each school in the survey. Only one of the case study schools involved all their staff in the programme, and could

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[1] The case studies suggest that these BoT members may have been lead parents or had attended sessions as a parent.

genuinely be called a 'whole-school initiative'. Several schools partially involved the teachers, by reporting back at staff meetings to them and involving them in inviting parents to attend. One school only involved one lead teacher who was in a management position with release time, and who was not the teacher of the children whose parents were being targeted. At another school the lead teachers were all non-teaching staff, which meant that they had the time to focus on HSP:L. The downside was that the school's classroom teachers were not networked in. Some interviewees believed that if more teachers had been involved in HSP:L more parents may also have been. However, they had concerns about swamping full-time class teachers who were often involved in other professional development and teaching initiatives within the school:

> We have found that our teaching staff are out of the loop because we were able to pick it up. We did talk about it in meetings and asked for feedback, and sent out invites with children. Even though we asked teachers to generate an invite it didn't work. It's been a busy time for them, and I wonder how much involvement there would have been with the community had they been asked. It wouldn't have got going as easily. It took a lot of time out of all of our programmes. (Lead teacher focus group)

Interviewees in two case studies without a whole-school approach suggested that each teacher could join the informal part of at least one session during the series.

The case study school which applied a whole school approach involved teachers and teacher aides in support roles during the sessions. The ten teachers/aides who attended the focus group for 'other' teachers (not the lead teachers) told us what role they had played during the programme:

> I went along to one of the first meetings in [the region] for the programme where they introduced it. I came away with the feeling that this would be something really fantastic for our school and would meet lots of needs. I talked about it at a management meeting, and said it's really fantastic and I'm happy to support but not willing to take it on myself, so I was really pleased when [the lead teachers] put up their hands and said they were willing to take it on.

> [The lead teachers] set everything up and asked for helpers each time. I found it a good way to meet some of the families of my Pasifika children, because a lot of our Pacific families have seasonal work so they are unable to come to interviews at the beginning of the year because they have work commitments...

> I came along and helped serve, clean up and look after some of the children...I let the younger children play in my classroom.

> I was a support person. It opened up the lines of communication with parents of children in my classroom.

> I came along for meal times to meet parents.

> I already meet Pasifika families through the church, but to meet them outside of church and see them in a different role and see their confidence grow in the school was a big thing...

> …by having this focus in the school I became particularly aware of what was happening in Tonga...[for example] the royal family of Tonga was included in our prayers. We were

suddenly part of something beyond ourselves. I'm now watching Pasifika programmes on TV with a bit more interest because that's what our kids and their families are into.

My role in the meeting was really only to come and help with serving the food and tidying up, as teacher aides are good at doing. But with the children we knew when a meeting was coming up because there was always a big discussion about what they were going to eat that night...

I helped on the nights and helped supervise the children while the meetings were going on with the adults. It's the spin off, one thing leads to another. It opened things up to be able to talk about things with the kids in a different context with no great demands.

I came one night and found it a great eye opener to see the kids interacting with other children from other Islands, not necessarily their own Island. And even the parents commented that they don't often get together with other parents in such close proximity to chat together – they don't usually have the time...

Training

School Support Services (SSS) advisors are responsible for delivering HSP:L training workshops and providing support to individual schools or clusters of schools. The HSP:L resource folder suggests that the lead team from each school attend a facilitated workshop prior to the launch of HSP:L in the school, and regroup after every second parent session for further training for the next two sessions. SSS advisors in each region worked with the HSP:L programme in a similar way, but adapted it according to schools' unique needs as these became clear. One advisor described this aspect as the strongest feature of the HSP:L programme.

Schools are constantly adapting the material. I give a general overview of all the workshops then schools talk about what they think about each aspect and where they should start. They learn about the content as they go according to the parent's needs.

All but one school in the survey had attended HSP:L training run by SSS or another provider. Sixty-one percent had found it 'very useful', and 39 percent had found it 'useful'. Comments from one of the case study lead parent focus groups illustrate how and why the lead parents found the training useful:

The reflection and sharing was good. The facilitator was awesome. It wasn't boring and it wasn't like being treated as a kid again. The activities were fun. We weren't just sitting, we were getting up etc.

We got ideas for what to do in the parent groups. We did brainstorming for activities.

We acted out a book. It was awesome....

The DVD of the Laughing Samoans was good.

We did different topics and then rotated – homework, games in cars. It was fun.

We talked about what different schools could do. Some were having a really hard time...

Some of the case study schools found the training did not meet their needs as they had thought it would. A principal at one school explained her preference for more information and depth to be provided at the training workshops they attended:

> The training workshops could've been more rigorous and more specific and directive. The structure was too loose and waffly. For example one person talked about her life story. It needed more of a child centred focus, and needed two to three ideas for people to take away from the session. Lead parents may not have the skills to connect ideas or direct them towards facilitating learning. (Principal)

At another case study school, the lead teachers discovered the first two sessions delivered as the resource folder and training suggested were "too drawn out" and did not meet parents' expectations. The lead teachers felt uncomfortable facilitating the routines session with parents, because "it was too much us telling the parents what to do". They were also worried that the timing between sessions was too drawn out and the programme lost its momentum. They said in future they would pace the sessions two weeks apart, having four sessions instead of six.

One of the challenges for the SSS advisors in the HSP model is the combination of training for both teachers and parents in the lead team. The lead teachers at one case study school offered the following insight about this:

> [At the training workshops] it was so important sharing with other schools. It was also brilliant for lead parents to meet other lead parents – so they relaxed into it. The laid back approach of all the workshops was probably calculated – it would scare off lead parents otherwise. It was a bit frustrating for us teachers. The workshop facilitators were modelling how our own sessions here could go and how we could run them. We didn't get direct learning out of it as teachers but we could have done with sitting back to see how they were managing the relaxed style to make parents feel comfortable. (Lead teachers' paraphrased conversation).

The following figure illustrates the value survey respondents identified for each of the training and resource components of the HSP:L programme.

Figure 1   **Training and support resources used by schools in HSP:L**
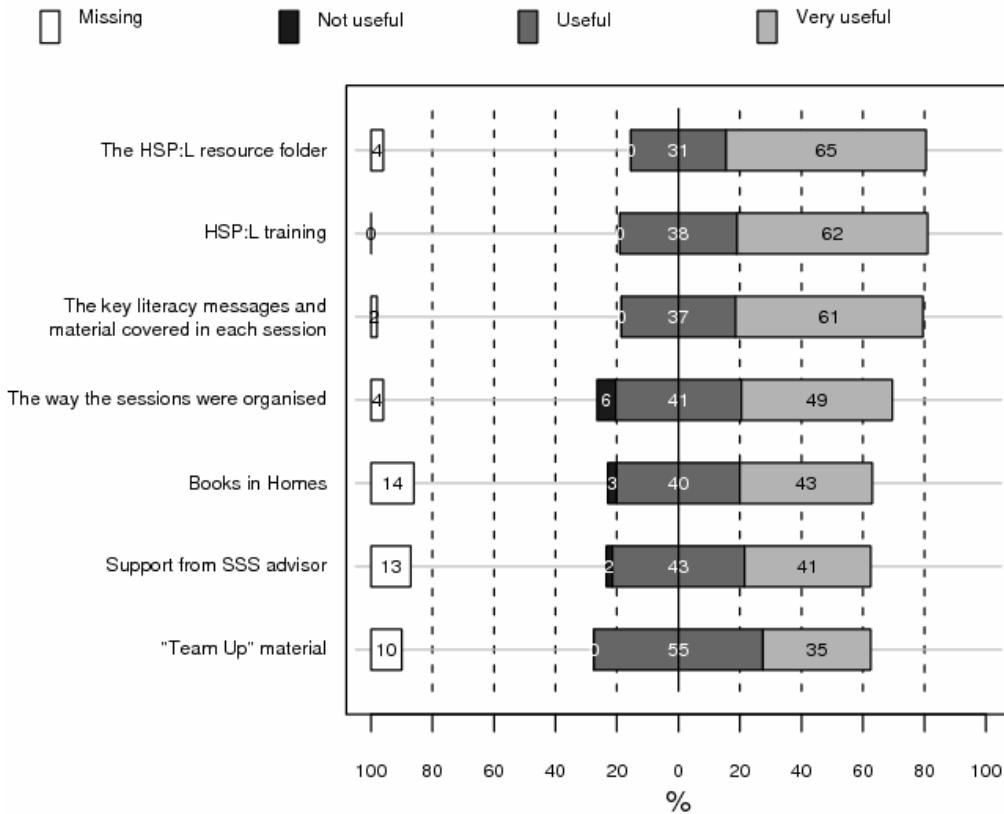
The HSP:L resource folder

The table below indicates how useful schools found the HSP:L resource folder for running a series of parent sessions.

Table 7   **Use-value of HSP:L resource folder**

	Very useful	Useful	Not useful	Did not use / did not respond
	%	%	%	%
HSP:L resource folder	65	31	0	4
Key literacy messages and material covered in each session	61	37	0	2
The way the sessions were organised overall	49	41	6	4

The resource folder as a whole was rated useful by all schools that responded, although our case studies suggest that some referred to it more than others.

> I didn't read all the stuff at the start of the folder. I haven't got time. [The lead parents] read it all cover to cover. It wasn't necessary for me and it was easy. (lead teacher)

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The folder was well set out but [one lead parent] with English as a second language needed to clarify a lot. We had to translate the 'teacher talk' for her. The lead parents found it difficult to understand it at the time. (lead teacher)

Several schools pointed out that the lead parents, and or a liaison person, had translated the key messages and hand outs into another language. This involved drawing on more culturally appropriate examples and concepts, rather than simply sentence-to-sentence translation. In one survey school the entire folder was adapted by ESOL advisors and refugee liaison officers so that lead parents could work with it. While some case study interviewees strongly believed that translation was a time-consuming process that should be provided by the Ministry of Education, others appreciated the opportunity to shape the resources to best suit their unique community.

We liked doing the translations because we can translate it in our own understanding and make it easier for the parents to understand. (lead parent)

Modifications to folder

Survey respondents suggested a variety of ways in which the session content in the sessions or the resource folder could be modified or changed to be more useful.

- The material should be translated into other languages (3 schools)
- The whole resource folder should be adapted to better suit non-Pacific and non-Mäori families (1)
- The pace of the sessions needs to be more flexible so it can be adjusted dependent on needs (3)
- [There should be] more about school's approaches to learning or assessment (2)
- [There should be] more attractive hand-out and poster materials (2)
- [There should be] more about children's reading (3)
- [There should be] more support for clusters of schools to work together (1)
- Re-order the sessions, so that a reading session comes earlier (1)

Five surveyed schools also mentioned that the HSP:L programme should remain flexible, to enable lead teams to adapt the session plan and materials to best suit their local community. This suggestion, and most of the above, echoed several responses with the case studies. It was apparent that some schools' lead teams believed that they had more scope to make changes to the structure and content of the HSP:L sessions than others. The more confident lead team members were in their role, the more likely they were to approach the resource folder as a set of flexible guidelines. It is arguable whether the folder itself explicitly promotes flexibility:

Schools may choose to deliver the programme in a variety of ways, as appropriate to the needs and strengths of their particular school community. For example, a lead team would need to make adjustments to meet the needs of a monolingual school community. (MOE, 2003, p. 9)

We found that several SSS advisors empowered lead teams and instilled a sense of ownership in them, by the messages they gave them:

> [The SSS trainer] was a fantastic advisor. She didn't give us boundaries. She said we could take [the folder] and do what we wanted with it. (lead teacher)

> We really only got the message that we could make adaptations because it was implied. We got the message that we could make changes because we didn't get growled at [when we made them] and because every school was talking about their different approaches. (lead teacher)

Nevertheless, there is little other explicit guidance on how things might be adjusted, apart from a list of potential additional references and resource materials.

> Modules are a good idea, so you could pick what's relevant. Focusing on different languages didn't really relate to this school. We did still do an exercise based on different languages – where we got them to go through a book and find the word teacher in Mäori. They found it really hard, the point being that it is like for children whose families don't speak English. It wasn't really appropriate for this school but it's still a good exercise. We spent ages trying to get extra resources. We went through the lists [from the folder/training] but phone numbers didn't exist and website links didn't work. We had to find our own resources. We would like ideas for more resources. (lead parents)

Key messages

Several case study interviewees noted that the messages and materials in the resource folder were not entirely appropriate for all parents attending their sessions, and one advisor said:

> A lot of schools have said there is not enough substance or guts in the first sessions.

The following conversation between two parents at a school where the lead team had some concerns that the HSP:L resources were too simplistic, and where the principal was concerned that "parents who always come along to sessions tend to be the ones who need it least," illustrated this point:

> We did it all before so it's not new to our family. We probably sit more and discuss what's happening at school, and do longer discussion times now. The kids aren't happy about it - they want more playtime!

> It was good to know I was already on the right track, but it still gave me more ideas and made me more conscious of it. For example, the other day I took my preschooler to feed the horse and we found a worm and had a half hour conversation about it! (parents focus group)

However, another parent did find the key messages useful:

> It's made a lot of difference. Now when [my son] comes home I can talk to him about everything "How are you?", "What have you done?" You appreciate them more and more because you're listening to them. (parents focus group)

The third parent quoted here appeared to have transformed her parenting approach, motivated by HSP:L's key messages and sharing with other parents:

An advisor said: A lot of schools have said there is not enough substance or guts in the first sessions.

Supplementary resources used in sessions

The HSP:L resource folder makes suggestions of supplementary resources that can be used in the programme. Table 8 illustrates how useful the resources are.

Table 8 **Use-value of support materials**

	Very useful	**Useful**	**Not useful**	**Did not use / Did not respond**
Team Up material	29	45	0	27
Books in Homes	31	29	2	39
Other	-	-	-	65

A third of the respondents (35 percent) mentioned "other" resource(s) to help run HSP:L, although they did not indicate how useful they found these. They included:

- Photos or visual resources, including digital media created by students and teachers (3 schools)
- Tupu Readers, (2)
- English Readers (1)
- School readers/journals in other languages (1)
- Ethnic artifacts (2)
- Guest speakers, e.g. University staff, Public Health Nurse, or other local experts (2)
- Local library resources/programmes (1)
- "Children's Warrant of Fitness" (1)
- Ministry of Education Pacific resource (2)
- Key school documents, e.g. school charter, management and/or education plans (2)
- Examples of classroom literacy activities, e.g. Pause, Prompt, Praise (2)
- Examples from other curriculum areas (2)
- Newspapers (1)

Attendance

We were interested to know which parents came to the HSP:L sessions. We asked schools in the survey to tell us who they had invited, and who came. Originally, the HSP:L programme was an initiative designed to involve Pacific families, but today the programme is envisaged to engage the family members of all students in a school. There is an intent, however, for priority to be given to particular groups of parents, with one of the programme aims being to "welcome into the school community parent groups who may have been difficult to engage previously" (MOE, 2006, p.10). The HSP:L resource folder also suggests that one teacher and at least one parent lead each

of the school community's ethnic groups in the first language of the group, which is a vital component of the programme in making these parents feel welcome. So, it was encouraging to see that 41 percent of surveyed schools targeted and invited selected ethnic groups of parents to attend. Three schools had targeted parents of students in particular year groupings, such as the parents of new entrant children, for example. Just fewer than 60 percent invited all of the parents at the school to attend, regardless of year levels or cultural/ethnic groupings.

Figure 2 shows the ethnic groups of parents that attended HSP:L programmes in the survey schools. Please note it represents the proportion of schools that said a particular group was represented – not the proportion of parents within each school. It is also dependent on the lead teachers' assumptions about parents' ethnicities. It is not surprising, considering the heritage of this programme, that Pacific parents were the most likely grouping to be represented at a schools' HSP:L sessions. From the Pacific nations, 92 percent of schools had Samoan parents attend their HSP:L sessions, 76 percent had Tongan parents, and 67 percent Cook Island Mäori. Others included: Niuean (37 percent), Fijian (20 percent), Tokelauan (18 percent). The broad "Asian" grouping includes, parents who were Chinese, Korean, Burmese, Phillipino, and those descended from other Asian nations. Other European included Argentinean, Assyrian, Arabic, and Dutch. "Others" included, South African Zulu, Sudanese, and Ugandan parents. No doubt there were also parents from other nations represented in the above categories.

Figure 2 **Ethnic groups that attended HSP:L sessions and languages used**
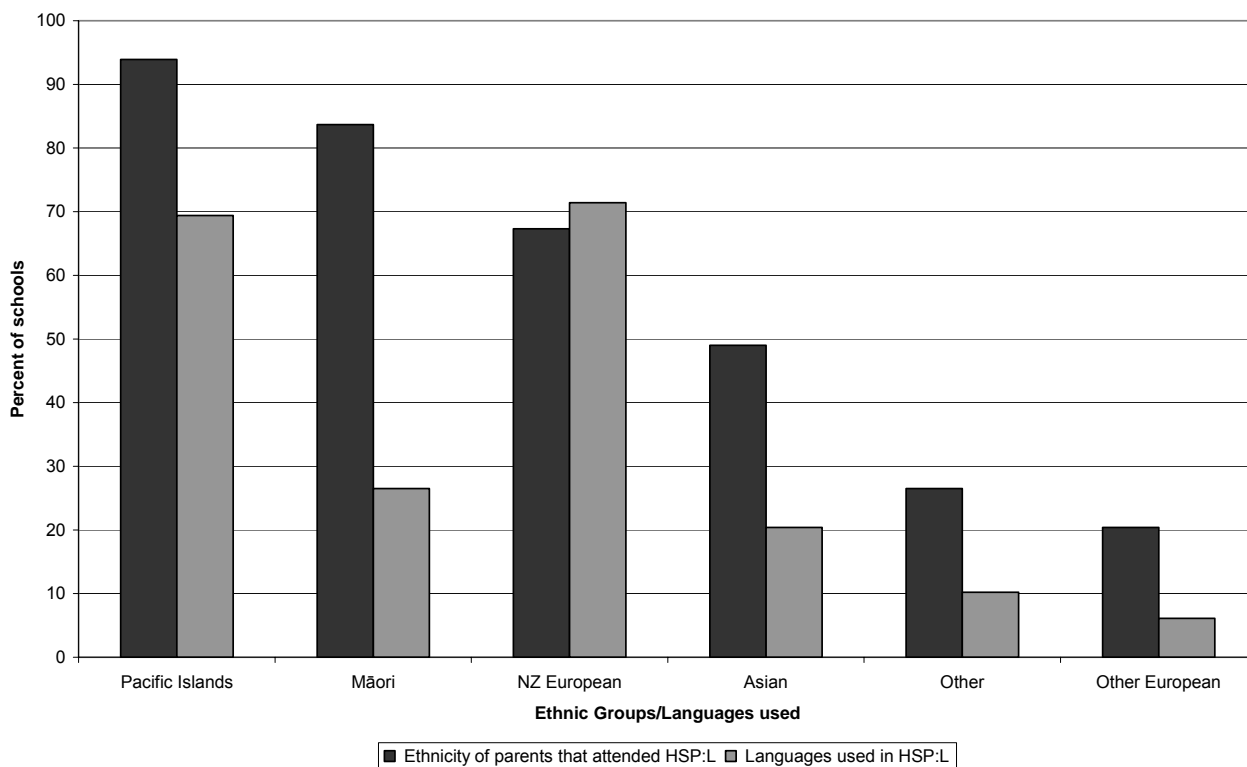
As mentioned, lead parents' ethnicity as well as an ability to speak in a language other than English, was often key to their selection. Indeed in 70 percent of schools, at least one Pacific language was spoken in their HSP:L sessions (most common was Samoan at 65 percent, followed by Tongan 41 percent, Cook Island Mäori 37 percent, and Niuean, 25 percent). Te reo Mäori was spoken in just over 25 percent of schools. Within the broad Asian grouping, Indian languages were spoken in four schools, South East Asian and Chinese languages each in two schools, and Afghani and Somali languages each in one). English was still spoken more frequently than any other language – and in 12 percent of schools it was the only language used. In just over two-thirds of all schools at least two languages were used during the sessions.

We expect that use of non-English languages ranged from occasional use to full immersion sessions. As the case studies showed there are many ways in which the lead team might structure sessions in relation to different cultural and language backgrounds. For example, at one school the lead teachers mentioned that there was little reason for them to join group work because "it was in [the parents'] first language, so we just popped in and they'd tease us". That said, other case study schools highlighted that initial intentions did not always play out. Even though lead parents were chosen because of their language abilities, they did not always end up facilitating in this language. The quotes below give an insight into the thinking of three different 'parties' in a school where Te Reo Mäori was an initial possibility:

> We talked about home languages on our introduction night and in the second session. We had all of the resources in Mäori and nobody took any of them. We showed the kaupapa from page six of the folder every session. But parents said we want to talk in English. We were all prepared for it and they didn't want it. (lead teacher)

> We put up greetings and key messages on the wall in different languages. People from different cultures didn't have problems with English as a language, and it wasn't really our focus. Those parts of the sessions didn't relate to us because we had everybody together. We are all one, so went in as one. (lead parent)

> [The lead teacher] thought I'd talk Mäori but I said if someone can't talk back to me I won't use it. English is just as important to me as Mäori. I'd slackened with speaking te reo with my children because it gives them the best of both languages [to speak in English as well]. (parent)

Facilitation support

The HSP:L resource folder outlines six sessions for the lead team to facilitate:

- Setting the Scene with Parents and Families
- Enriching Children's Language by Talking with Them
- Extending Children's Language Experiences
- Developing and Maintaining Effective Home Routines and Practices
- The Reading Partnership A
- The Reading Partnership B

Some case study schools made changes to the session framework and some added different content to some sessions. For example, one school combined two of the above sessions into one, one collapsed six sessions into three and added a writing session, while another added material to several sessions. This was in response to their parents' needs and feedback..

Lead teams also spoke about the different ways they went about facilitating the sessions with parents with some lead teachers taking a more dominant facilitating role in the first few sessions and then dropping back, allowing the lead parent to take over. This seemed to depend on the different strengths of their lead team members, and on the parent's level of confidence. As the sessions continued the scaffolding of the lead parent meant that they increasingly became the lead facilitator. The ways in which the parents and lead teams interacted in the sessions is illustrated in more detail in a discussion about partnership in the next chapter.

Parental involvement

One of the problems that case study lead teachers talked about was the fluctuations in parent attendance at the sessions. We wanted to investigate if this had happened more widely, so asked schools in the survey to record the 'average' number of parents that attended each session. These results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9   **Average number of parents that attended**

Average number of parents at each session	Number of schools	% of schools
1 – 5	3	6
6 – 10	7	14
11 – 20	14	29
21 – 30	8	16
31 – 40	9	18
41 – 50	4	8
51 +	4	8

Sixty three percent of schools said they had between 11 and 40 parents attend each session. Figure 3 represents variance. Roughly one third of schools had very consistent numbers attending, one third experienced a moderate amount of variance, and one third had a large difference between their biggest and smallest session.

Figure 3 **Range of session numbers within the series for each school**
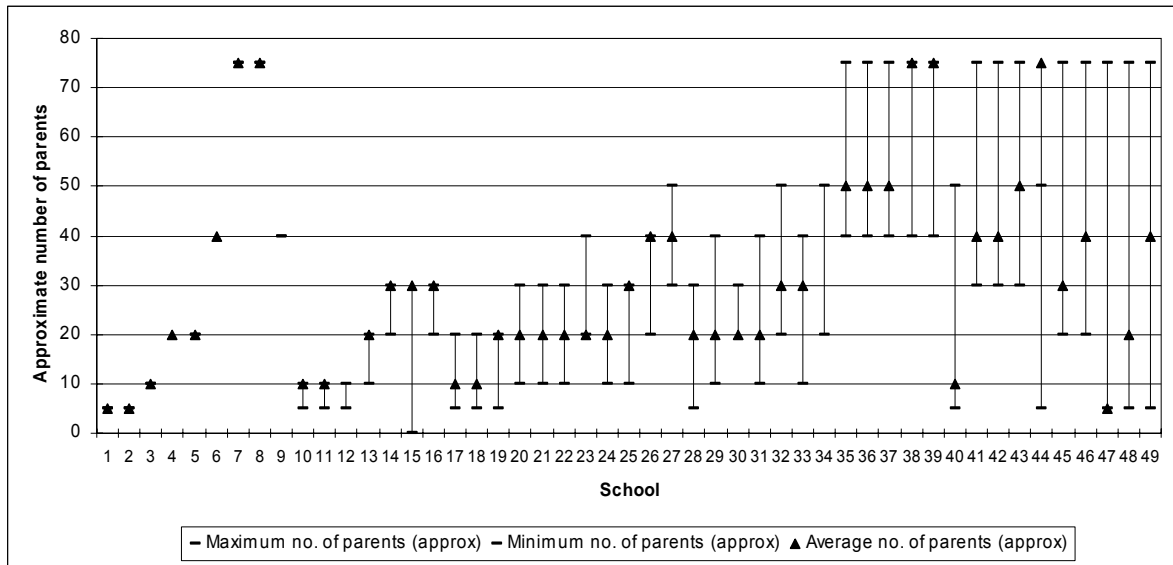
Raw numbers only provided part of the picture, since school size and the proportion of parents invited vary. The proportion of parents who were invited *and* attended at least one session was fairly low; about half the survey schools engaged less than one-fifth of those invited. Table 10 gives more detail.

Table 10 **Proportion of invited parents that attended**

Proportion attending	Number of schools	% of schools
No response	1	2
0 – 20%	25	51
21 – 40%	14	29
41 – 60%	5	10
61 – 80%	3	6
81 – 100%	1	2

According to the survey respondents in 70 percent of schools there was no particular group of parents who were noticeably under-represented. The remaining 14 schools described at least one group that they believed were disproportionately absent:

- Mäori parents (7 schools)
- Parents from at least one Pacific nation (5 schools)
- Pakeha/ NZ European parents (1 school)
- Parents of children struggling with literacy (2 schools)
- (At least two case study schools also mentioned that women were far more likely to attend than men).

We also asked survey respondents to indicate any challenges that prevented a larger proportion of parents from attending sessions. Their responses are presented in Table 11:

Table 11   **Challenges that prevented a higher number of parents from attending**

	Number of schools	% of schools
Not enough time/other commitments	32	65
Timing of the sessions	21	43
Weather	18	37
Transport difficulties	16	33
Sessions clashed with other community functions or popular TV viewing times	16	33
Childcare responsibilities	10	20
Content of the sessions	7	14
Parents weren't aware sessions were on	4	8
Facilitation of the sessions	1	2
Other	14	29

Timing due to other commitments and transport were key barriers. Other challenges added by survey respondents were:

- Parents did not feel comfortable or confident coming to the school sessions, because they see school and education to be more for teachers and students than parents.
- Parents came as long as free food and raffles were provided. By the last session we thought they would come for the good of the partnership and did not offer free food - just childcare facilities. We had more teacher help at this last session than parents.
- It is extremely hard to get parents involved no matter what you offer.

It needs to be remembered that these challenges are the viewpoints of principals and lead teachers (who filled in the survey) and may not fairly represent parent's reasons for non-attendance. However, the implications are that some schools have some groundwork to do to begin to establish relationships with the parents they are referring to, before they can expect them to start attending school events such as the HSP:L sessions.

Strategies to support parental attendance

One of the key factors for schools to get right for maximum attendance at sessions was timing when they happened. A lot of thought, and often an amount of informal research, was invested in deciding the best time to run HSP:L sessions. Each school had to take quite different factors into account, for example, the lead team in one case study school juggled HSP:L around lambing, shearing, milking, calving, etc, whereas those in another took television programmes and competing community meetings into account. Some schools found that in future they would not

hold sessions in the winter term when it is too dark and cold for families to come out at night. One school held their sessions from 9–10am just after parents had dropped children off to school, and they reported capturing a number of fulltime employed parents who said it didn't matter if they were an hour late to work on those days.

The survey responses indicated that 18 percent of schools ran the same session in at least two different time-slots, either as an initial test to find a single time solution or as an ongoing approach. Most schools (86 percent) ran their sessions on a week day evening. Ten percent of schools ran theirs soon after school finished, or during school time (12 percent). For most schools (90 per cent) the sessions were one to two hours long.

Our case studies revealed that lead teams developed a wide range of strategies for inviting parents to attend HSP:L. Table 12 shows the most common channels of communication about HSP:L were via school newsletters, students, and specific HSP:L invitations (perhaps designed by students and/or in parents' first language).

Table 12   **How invitations were extended to parents**

Invitation channels	Number of schools	% of schools
School newsletter	48	98
Asked students to encourage their parents to come	47	96
Specific written invitations	33	67
Word of mouth between parents	30	61
Phone calls to parents from lead parent	26	53
Phones calls to parents from lead teacher	13	27
Other	13	27

Table 13 demonstrates that most schools appeared to be conscious that it is not only the way in which invitations are extended, but the environment that parents are welcomed into that encourages parents to attend. Nearly all schools (96 percent) provided some form of childcare to enable parents with other children to attend sessions, yet this was accessed by families in a lesser proportion of schools (78 percent).

Table 13   **Other strategies to encourage parents to attend**

Strategies	Number of schools	% of schools
Provided childcare	47	96
Provided food	46	94
Ran the same session at different timeslots	9	18
Piggy backed session other parent function	5	10
Draw, raffle or competition	10	20

The case studies identified another factor influencing parental involvement – the enthusiasm of students. The next three quotes from students in three different schools illustrate the different levels of enthusiasm. The first were students who resented HSP:L reducing family time, the second believed that HSP:L had improved quality family time, and the third was a student at a school where HSP:L ran as a whole-family event.

> [Student 1] I don't like parents going to the sessions because we have to stay at home with a babysitter. Mum comes back too late to say goodnight to me. [Student 2] My mum reads heaps. She didn't think she liked reading until now. Now she goes to library. She spends less time with us because she's reading in her room. It's not that good. But she can help me with my work sometimes. (student focus group conversation)

> With my parents [HSP:L] helps us to get more together. Like when we have tea, now we turn off the TV. We talk about what we're going to do for Christmas, and what we should get people. Last year we did talk too, but we didn't do it as much. (student)

> We come because my sister wants to come – my Dad wants to hang around with other Tongans. (student)

Table 14 shows that there is a continuum from students' passive to active engagement in HSP:L – with less schools representing the more active possibilities at the bottom.

Table 14   **Student Involvement in HSP:L**

	Number of schools	% of schools
Take school newsletter/invite home	47	96
Attend childcare provided	38	78
Write personal invitations	26	53
Participate in adult sessions*	22	45
Perform for parents (e.g. song, dance etc)	21	43
Take part in parallel students' literacy sessions	8	16
Other	3	6

* We suspect this often only happened in Session 5 where students work with parents to demonstrate reading partnerships.

One of the case study schools ran parallel HSP:L sessions for students, so that while the parents were discussing ways of talking to their children in the home more for instance, the children were writing lists on the computer of what they wanted their parents to talk to them about. A student described one of these sessions:

> We wrote questions on the computer asking our parents questions about going to the movies, or shopping in our language. It was kind of like homework. (student)

Another case study school that involved students, had 300 parents turn up to a final session. They had organised and set up in the hall, an interactive literacy programme with teaching stations for the children to take their parents around, showing them how to use a listening post, how to play computer literacy games, what first language books there were, taking part in quizzes and puzzles, and so on.

Section B: Case studies

Case study summaries

Throughout this chapter we have woven in narrative from our six case study schools. To conclude, we will now provide a short summary of each of the case studies[2]. These are intended to give the reader a better understanding of how HSP:L is implemented in unique and complex environments.

Case Study One

This rural school took part in HSP:L as part of a regional cluster. The principal selected a teacher to coordinate the programme, but other teaching staff had little involvement due to competing demands within such a small school. Two "bubbly approachable" lead parents, one Mäori and one New Zealand European, were recruited and paid for some of their time. The series was planned to avoid rural farming pressure points, such as calving.

The lead teacher and both lead parents attended four regional training workshops facilitated by local SSS HSP:L advisors to share experiences across schools, and for ongoing reflection and planning. The lead team also met at least once before each session to select or design resources and develop session plans. In line with the lead teacher's goal to pass over responsibility to the lead parent over the course of the sessions, the lead parents met on their own to prepare the final session. The team supplemented the sessions with other literacy resources and materials, which they felt served their parent's needs.

Students wrote personal invitations to their parents, and the lead parents followed up by encouraging parents they knew to attend. A local priest opened the first session and they had a

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[2] Some details have been omitted or slightly adjusted to protect schools' identities.

community hängi to end the series. About 12 parents, mostly mothers, attended each of the five 1–2 hour sessions (each was repeated in the morning and evening). The lead teacher facilitated the first three sessions, and the lead parents facilitated the final two.

In a typical session, a facilitator reviewed ideas from the previous meeting before introducing the new work. Then resources and key messages were used to encourage informal conversations between parents about what they did at home. The focus was on parents sharing experiences and learning from one another. Generally the parents stayed talking as a whole group, and the opportunity to speak or read in non-English languages was not taken up. At the end of each session parents filled out a short evaluation form and took home at least one resource such as the Team Up[3] booklet or a leaflet about helping children learn in different environments.

Students were told very little about HSP:L apart from that parents were learning about how to help them learn, and whatever else their parents chose to share with them. The childcare provided by the staff member who also prepared the food and drink was not taken up to the extent that the lead team expected.

HSP:L was seen to sit alongside other parent engagement initiatives, such as Computers in Homes and fundraising events. The school did not see how HSP:L could continue the following year without more funding. They were also aware of other schools that had experienced less success with the programme.

Case Study Two

This large urban primary school had merged with at least two schools over the past few years. The principal attended an introductory HSP:L meeting for school leaders in the area, and became interested in the programme as an opportunity to engage the school community as a whole, to help create a new school culture between the previous school communities, and to help address students' literacy and learning challenges through avenues beyond the schools' previous LPDP involvement.

The principal began by selecting three lead parents and three lead teachers. None of the lead teachers were full time classroom teachers and they had expertise in literacy and behaviour support through their ESOL, RTLB and Reading Recovery work. Because of high interest, five parents became lead parents - two Pakeha, one Samoan, and two Mäori. They all attended SSS training workshops with one of the lead teachers.

The lead team closely followed the suggested HSP:L structure. The programme commenced with a student performance for parents who were then invited next door to take part in an introductory session. Later invitations and communication about HSP:L were mostly channelled through the school newsletter and other notices. The team test-ran the half hour sessions at different times,

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[3] The Team Up resources have been designed by the MOE to follow up on the television Team Up advertisements.

and found that just before the close of school had the best uptake. Transport and childcare were provided for parents who needed it, although unpredictable numbers made this quite hard to manage.

The lead team followed the same routine for each session. Each meeting began with refreshments, a raffle, and an icebreaker activity. After a general introduction to the session's purpose, parents broke into three groups – Mäori, Samoan, and Pakeha. Approximately 3–4 parents joined each small group – though overall numbers fluctuated between 32 and 2 over the series. The lead teachers consciously took a backseat, and all lead parents facilitated the sessions, primarily in English. Different lead parents had different ways of working, with some groups being more facilitator-led than others. Parents took home a handout of the main ideas covered from each session.

Very few teachers and school staff, outside of the lead team, knew much about HSP:L and few had engaged students in conversation about it. Some of the lead team were a little demoralised by fairly low parent numbers, including an absence of Pacific parents by the last session and having less than five parents visit each classroom for the "open reading" day wrap-up event. That said, most were optimistic about the difference it made to a few, and the possibility for using different strategies to welcome a greater number into the school next time. They were also interested in repeating the HSP:L programme with more flexibility to follow parents' interests. The principal saw an opportunity to use the model for other learning areas, such as, nutrition, numeracy, and Mäori culture, hoping to explore a possible funding avenue through Fruit in Schools[4].

Case Study Three

This Catholic school had a steadily increasing proportion of Pacific students on their roll over the past few years. The principal in consultation with the school's management team, asked two teachers and a parent, who was active in the school and local church, to attend an introductory HSP:L meeting. All saw HSP:L as a vehicle for further developing a three-way partnership between the school, families, and the parish. They decided to work with the schools' two main Pacific communities, Samoan, and Tongan, in the first instance with the possibility of extending it to other groups in following years.

Two more lead parents were carefully chosen to join the lead team and take the programme forwards – beginning with an introductory session for the whole school staff where one of the lead parents discussed education in the Islands and culturally appropriate ways of working with Pacific families and students. It was decided that to be successful HSP:L needed to operate as a whole-school and whole-family initiative.

The lead parents spent a lot of time translating HSP:L key messages and discussing more relevant examples for parents in their community. They believed the greatest challenge (and value) was to

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[4] This is a professional development contract available to schools mainly funded by the Ministry of Health.

effectively impart the message about the educational benefits of parents speaking to their children in their first language, a message that they believed contradicted advice previously given to Pacific parents.

Having the principal introduce the HSP:L series and explain that it was a Ministry of Education programme helped to raise the status of the work. The principal also attended the start of every HSP:L session which again gave the parents the message that this programme was important. Each session began with blessings and prayers. Teachers prepared a meal for the families and a majority of the schools' staff. Afterwards parents split into the two language groupings, facilitated by the lead parents and generally without a lead teacher present. The teachers worked with the children in other spaces, taking them through parallel literacy activities and discussion. Up to 50 students and 30 family members, including mothers, fathers, elder siblings, aunties, uncles, and grandparents, attended each session (12 adults were at the smallest session). Everyone came back together at the end of each session for a closing prayer. The initial weekend slot was changed to a weekday dinner period to better suit the lives of seasonal workers.

HSP:L had a transformative effect on the school, in particular the relationship between teachers and Pacific families. The principal expected that further HSP programme initiatives would have to be juggled between competing professional development initiatives coming from the Ministry of Education. He had also encouraged other school leaders in the area to consider HSP:L in their schools, and the lead parents had discussed HSP:L with the local high school and community groups. They wanted to avoid HSP:L only being available to parents in one school, when local Pacific communities extend beyond school boundaries.

Case Study Four

The principal of a small mid-decile urban school decided to implement the HSP:L programme with parents of the new-entrant children at the school, as a way of introducing and building a sound home-school partnership. The school had not been involved in an in-depth literacy professional development programme, and while there were important early literacy messages they wanted to use from the programme, they also had other aims and adapted the programme accordingly. The written invitation that was sent to new-entrant parents said:

> […] school invites you to find out what happens at school. We have planned four sessions that focus on reading, writing and maths.

The lead teacher also said they wanted to help these new parents to learn about the school, and the lead parent said it was important for these parents to meet each other.

Both the lead parent and lead teacher were asked to be involved by the principal and they received a lot of help from the SSS advisor in the training sessions and in setting goals appropriate for their school. This was not a whole-school implementation and, while the new entrant teachers were aware of the programme, they were not involved in it. The lead teacher was in a management position with some release time, and the lead parent had older children in the school.

The four sessions followed the resource folder generally covering routines, language, and reading in the first three sessions and then introducing a new writing component in session four. The sessions were held between nine and ten in the mornings, two weeks apart so parents who were dropping off children could attend. Personal invitations were sent out to the target parents initially, and these were followed up with phone calls as the sessions continued. A crèche was provided for younger children and tea and biscuits provided for parents when they first arrived.

There were 21 parents at the first session, but these numbers dropped to eight by the second session. The lead teacher felt that the first session was not what the parents were expecting:

> They wanted to know what they should be doing to help their children … they don't understand how children are learning and understanding the strategies and if they are teaching them wrong at home, then there is conflict.

The first session on routines therefore, was not what many of the parents were expecting and she felt that this was why some decided not to continue coming. The invitation home had been worded:

> […school] invites you to find out what happens at school. We have planned four sessions that focus on reading, writing and maths. Come along!

It was not therefore surprising that parents did not come back, and after reflecting on the programme the lead teacher and principal wrote in their report: 'Ensure the initial invitation informs and outlines the complete programme for course members'.

The parents spoken to in the focus group had come to all the sessions, and said they did find the early sessions on routines and communicating with their child useful. They reported working in each session with both the lead teacher and lead parent, and they thought it was good having a lead parent there who related well with them. Interestingly, they thought the HSP:L programme was about homework, and they talked about changing their routines around home reading, which their children confirmed when spoken to in the student focus group.

Case Study Five

This school was a large, low decile, multi-cultural, urban primary school which had a commissioner because it has been identified as an 'at risk' school. A previous home-school initiative had fallen over there. Both the commissioner and principal supported the programme as a way of building a greater level of confidence with parents. The sessions were set up to target some of the dominant cultural groups in the school such as Pacific groups, Indian, and Chinese. Five lead teachers and lead parents were invited to take part by the Samoan co-ordinator, who was well-respected by the school and community. A range of languages were used according to the constitutions of the groups. One group which consisted of a mixture of ethnic groups (Somali, Indian, Chinese, and Pasifika groups other than Samoan, Tongan, and Cook Island Mäori), used English and named themselves "other".

The coordinator of the HSP:L programme in this school went to considerable length to ensure the programme was successful. All the invitations to parents, key messages, and other materials used in the sessions were translated into the appropriate languages. The coordinator ensured all staff knew what was happening through regular reports at staff meetings and she gave them strategies to use with the students in their classes to remind the parents about up-coming sessions. Children from all classes were involved in performances to ensure a good parent turn-out. She also got community businesses involved by donating raffle prizes (including a bike and meat packages, hampers, a wheelbarrow full of groceries) and food and drinks for the sausage sizzle that was put on before each session for the families attending. The programme was advertised on radio and in the community newsletter. One teacher videoed sessions and included photos of the parents at sessions in the reminder newsletters, and children made posters to inform parents.

This school worked with a buddy school in the SSS training sessions which they found useful for exchanging ideas and feedback. They worked with the SSS facilitators to modify the programme according to their own school needs. They had previously held the sessions in the weekend but found too many parents worked then, so this time held sessions at dinner time in the evening and invited the whole family to a sausage sizzle first. When the parents went off to their groups the children were looked after by other voluntary staff members in the library, computer room and crèche. Involving and feeding the whole family was an important part of the success of the implementation, and the high attendance rate (between 150–300 parents) was an indication of this. The lead teachers felt that attendance could have been even higher if the programme hadn't been held in the winter term, and if the sessions had been held closer together to maintain momentum.

Case Study Six

School six had very similar contextual features to school five, being low decile, urban, multi-cultural and large. However, the implementation of the HSP:L programme was very different as it focused on the importance of oral language for children's literacy learning. The school was also involved in Te Kauhua professional development and wanted to integrate the two together. The principal shoulder-tapped two teachers to co-ordinate the HSP:L programme, as a 'good stepping stone' for them moving in to middle management. They were initially unprepared and reluctant to take it on, and struggled with the initial training and implementation.

Four other lead teachers were selected by the coordinators, and they initially followed the model advocated by the training and resource folder, and organised sessions according to ethnic groupings of parents in their school. Tongan, Indian, Māori, Samoan and Kiwi groups were identified and a grandmother, a father and mothers were shoulder tapped to be lead parents. Sessions were held in the evenings over tea time and a sausage sizzle was provided for families, with the computer room available and videos set up for children in the library. The newsletter home inviting parents was translated into the different languages and photos of children were added. Draws for a DVD player and grocery packs were advertised and this was seen to draw in a number of parents.

Lead teachers were surprised with the feedback after the first session where parents said they didn't want to be labelled and channelled into ethnic groups. There were various reasons for this. One was that many of the parents from Pacific Islands were now second generation New Zealanders and were not necessarily fluent in their first language. Some Mäori parents were annoyed with the reversal of attitude after 150 years of repression of the Mäori language and now "suddenly we're saying it is important, after many of us have lost it". After that the parents broke into groups according to the age of their children, where the session was organised around the information relevant to children's age groups.

Other important feedback from the parents after the first session was that the information provided was different from what was expected. The invitation to parents had been worded as: "Come and learn how to help your children's learning", and parent's comments included:

> I wanted to find out how to help my child work out a word she doesn't know.

> How do I get him to do writing?

> They don't want to do their homework. How do I get them to?

The lead teachers said the content of the first session was "too slow to get to the guts of things", and was patronising for some parents. Attendance at the first session was around 100 parents but it fell away after that. About half way through the programme the teachers were so despondent with low attendance numbers that they decided to abandon the original material in the HSP:L folder and redesign a programme that they felt their parents wanted and needed. Once they did this the numbers in the last two sessions grew again and their last night was a major success. For the last night all the teachers became involved. They set up learning stations in the hall of aspects of their literacy programmes, with games and activities for the children and their parents to interact with. The children took their parents round, talking with teachers at each station. This showed parents what was expected in literacy at the different levels, and allowed for one-to-one discussions between parents and teachers. The lead teachers felt that had this been the first session, they would have had far better attendance right through the programme.

Implementation Issues

There were a number of issues for schools in implementing the HSP:L programme, which it is now worth highlighting in the final section of this chapter. While implementation variations occurred in schools according to their unique needs, there were also a number of common issues that many schools shared. Both the unique variations and the commonalities need to be considered in an evaluation of the programme.

No one right way to implement HSP:L

The opportunities and challenges that lead teams need to attend to in order to implement HSP:L cannot be generalised. Schools design their HSP:L programme around the specific characteristics of their school and the wider community it serves. That said, there are a number of factors that schools appear to take into account when making decisions about whether and when to run HSP:L, who should lead it, who should be invited and how, what should be covered, and how the sessions should operate. Schools might consider, for example: different networks within their student and parent communities, including their ethnicities, occupations, and interests; the varied availability of lead team members and parents; apparent learning and parenting needs; and the strengths of particular individuals or groups within and outside the school.

Strong lead team

As with many professional development initiatives introduced into schools, there needs to be leadership from the top management level in prioritising and resourcing it, and there needs to be a strong team driving it. HSP:L demands strong and inclusive leadership from a number of individuals. It requires at least one (but preferably more) passionate school staff member and at least two committed parents. The skills and experience that each individual brings will differ, but as a group they must be able to establish and deepen relationships with a wide range of people. Often this requires them to "translate" words, but more importantly messages and values, between different worlds –whether that is for example, between the Pakeha script and Somali script for gatherings, or between English and Te Reo Mäori, or between the home context and the school context. When HSP:L is working well it creates a high-energy environment, where family members and teachers are enthused about sharing ideas with each other, learning new tips, and trying out a new way of doing things. This environment can only be created by an energised and optimistic lead team that believes in what they are facilitating and balances confidence with respect and humility.

Whole-school and whole-family initiative

Transformative and unifying effects for home-school communities emerged at schools where the programme involved the maximum number of school staff members and the most active participation from children and wider family members (not just mothers). That said, schools need to delicately navigate a path around the potential for swamping parent voice or letting 'teacher-culture' predominate, pushing towards teacher work-overload, or compromising other important priorities or programmes at the school. Making HSP:L compulsory for teachers who are not enthusiastic about HSP:L is definitely not the answer. HSP:L works best when it aligns well with a school's overall vision, and when it aligns with other professional development/teaching initiatives, which hopefully are all headed in the same direction; in a complementary rather than competitive relationship.

Time

Time was an important resource to implement this programme successfully. In the case study schools the lead teachers, lead parents and the co-ordinator, if one was appointed, talked a great deal about the time the programme took to organise, and the out-of-school hours required for the actual sessions to take place, especially if these were held in the evenings. The principal of the school that targeted the new entrant children had tried to resolve the time resourcing issue, by appointing the DP from the middle school who had some non-contact time allocated to do the organising. In doing so the school had tried very hard not to overload the new entrant teacher. However, they realised that this arrangement did not allow partnerships to develop between the parents and the teacher of their children. As a result of this experience, they decided to introduce numeracy through the HSP programme next year, as a whole-school approach.

Time pressures were also great for parents, many of whom worked in full-time employment, shift work, seasonal work or farming work with its contingent pressures. Juggling the timing of sessions to suit both parents and teachers was one of the most challenging aspects of this programme and most schools settled for satisfying the greatest numbers, but knowing they were never going to satisfy everyone. The 'tea hour' did emerge from the results as a popular time, and where schools provided a light family tea such as a sausage sizzle, this served several purposes – cultural and domestic.

Welcoming strategies

Schools appeared to have used a variety of successful strategies to welcome parents to the programme. The individual invitation approach seemed to be the most successful, especially if it was done face to face, or was translated into the parent's first language. Many schools used their students to 'hook in' their parents in various ways, from putting on performances, to writing letters home, and reminding their parents to attend.

Parent groupings

Some schools grouping of parents into cultural groups did not work. There are a number of possible reasons why parents made the decision not to work in parallel cultural and/or language groupings in sessions. One reason could be that the key message about first language may not be strong enough in the resource materials or initial sessions to convince parents that this is a preferable (or even acceptable) way to work. The second reason could be that there is not enough trustworthy research evidence provided for the lead team to give them the confidence to insist on this approach. A third reason could be that there is an assumption that all people within a given ethnic, cultural, or national grouping will all speak the same language and speak it with the same level of fluency. This is not necessarily the case, for example, not all Māori speak Te Reo, many second generation Pacific peoples do not speak their parent's national language, and in many countries there is more than one language or dialect spoken. A key question could be asked here,

about how HSP:L can support language revitalisation without making assumptions such as this one.

Important considerations of biculturalism and multiculturalism in schools and communities are raised by inviting all parents within a school to attend HSP:L. The philosophy of HSP:L is to value and draw from "the rich resources of diverse people in the school community" (Ministry of Education, 2003, p.6), and this message needs to be valued and modelled strongly in both the way the programme is implemented, and in the content. Crozier and Reay (2005) found in their research of parents and teacher partnerships in the United Kingdom, that the growing diversity of mass schooling in a hybridised and constantly changing society, is an issue that is not going to go away, and that there is an urgent need to address the dissonance of home-school relations experienced by many working class and minority ethnic group parents.

Modification of key messages in the resource folder

The HSP:L resource folder and key messages was used most effectively by the schools that targeted Pacific families. This is hardly surprising because it is who the resource was originally written for. It was less successful in schools with different groups of parents who found some of the messages less relevant. There was a good deal of evidence from the case studies and the survey that parents' expectations were not always met by the content of the sessions. This seemed to explain the fall-off in attendance that occurred in some schools. In some cases there was evidence that invitations to the programme were misleading or too vague, so that parents were disappointed with what they experienced in the first session. In other cases the key messages were not the ones parents wanted.

This observation links to the increasing recognition in the literature that the parent body is not homogeneous (Hanafin & Lynch 2002; Crozier and Reay 2005), and that factors such as ethnicity and class impacts on parents' knowledge about education and their children's schooling. Crozier and Reay warn that:

> 'far too often parents are perceived either as a homogeneous mass or reduced to a simplistic binary between 'the good' and 'the bad'…[that] both approaches neglect complex differentiations of class, ethnicity and gender…and cultural influences are often reduced to deficit models of working class and minority ethnic parents' (ibid. pp. 155–156).

It was interesting to see at one of the case study schools, when the parent numbers dropped off after the first session, the lead team went back to the drawing board and redesigned their key messages around some of the things that had been requested at the first session. This immediately brought parents back to the sessions. Various adaptations to the content were also reported by the survey schools. It became clear that schools need to decide *with* their various parent groups what information is needed and relevant. We are aware the Ministry is considering creating and making available a number of different modules and key messages for different literacy levels and topics, from which schools can choose to use with parents. This will be one way of addressing this need. We found particular success where schools listened to what parents wanted and co-constructed

new activities for the parent sessions, and recommend that this approach be suggested in the introduction to the sessions in the resource folder.

There is however, the need for balance in the design of the HSP:L resource folder, because it has two important functions – one, to introduce and offer guidance to lead parents who are new to facilitation/education, *and* two, - it needs to have the flexibility to enable lead teams to design sessions that are appropriate for their own school communities.

Funding

Concerns about funding were often in relation to release time for the coordinators and lead teachers. The other main funding concern was around the costs of feeding families, especially when the sessions were run over dinner time. Food was one very powerful incentive to attract families to come to the school, as well as culturally appropriate for many of the Pacific families. However, many schools realised that they had to arrange childcare facilities to get as many parents as possible to attend, and they had very few hours after school to find the perfect time – after parent's working hours, and before children needed to go to bed. This left them with very little choice apart from the tea hours (between 5.30–7.30 pm).

Implementation as partnership?

While there was some evidence that parents were involved in small ways in implementing this programme, (as lead parents and being consulted about session times), in the most significant ways they were not involved. No schools engaged parents about their needs, interests and expectations before the programme began. The evidence seems to suggest that some schools have a long way to go to involve parents in a compelling way in the initial planning stages so that teachers can be more responsive to their needs in the sessions. Schools that recognised this need did so as their attendance figures fell, and rapidly tried to back track and fit sessions round parents' needs more. This was a more favourable response than carrying on without making any changes, but it was still an opportunity missed.

3.   Partnership

Introduction

This section considers the notion of partnership between schools and families. The HSP:L programme endorses partnership as a key kaupapa or underlying philosophy which is based on cultural inclusion. It expresses its partnership aims through the following two whakataukï:

He aha te mea nui o te ao?   Näu te rourou, näku te rourou, ka ora te iwi.

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata!   *(With your food basket and my food basket,*

(What is the most important thing in the world?   everyone will have enough)

It is people, people, people!)

As the HSP:L resource handbook says:

> "The second whakataukï points out the importance of partnership – genuine sharing, hospitality, and reaching out to others. Every one of us has treasures to share, and what seems very simple can often be the best treasure of all. Every strand is needed to weave the community basket." (Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 122).

The handbook also lists several ideas as a partnership challenge for schools to think about when setting up this programme. These challenges are written mainly from the viewpoint of parents and remind teachers that:

"We are true partners when:

- you listen to what I have to say;
- you acknowledge my intelligence;
- you want to learn more about my ways;
- you don't judge me;
- you engage me in genuine dialogue;
- we make decisions together;
- you show that my child matters to you; and
- you include my experience, knowledge and viewpoints with yours" (ibid, p. 123).

These challenges determine how the HSP:L programme defines partnership. There have been a number of ways partnership has been defined in the literature, but the model that most closely resembles what is being aimed for in the HSP:L folder, is from the work of Timperley and Robinson (2002). In an attempt to determine how partnership improves the quality of schooling,

they draw on and synthesize the international literature on partnership, participation and collaboration and unravel the theory underpinning the different approaches. They describe how social democracy themes and student outcomes feature in these literatures, and that the multidimensional nature of partnership includes relationships that are in part about power, and are in part about achieving particular tasks or outcomes such as improving student success. They propose:

> If partnerships are to realise their potential benefits, both the relationship and task dimensions need to be integrated in ways that establish processes for the partners to work together and to learn from one another about how to achieve the task. (p. 14)

They add:

> In the generic sense, we propose that entities are in partnership when they each accept some responsibility for a problem, issue or task, and establish processes for accomplishing the task that promote learning, mutual accountability and shared power over relevant decisions. (p. 15)

In this evaluation, we would rate the majority of the schools were just beginning the journey to achieving these ends, and we argue that the evidence that follows in the next two chapters verifies this. While this might sound a disappointing result, we would also add that any relationship or partnership takes time to establish and evolve, and it would be unrealistic to expect this to happen quickly. The things that still need to be addressed and improved, such as establishing trust and developing relationships with parents, do not happen after one series of HSP:L sessions. However, a true partnership needs to begin with a shared need or defined problem that both partners agree is worth jointly solving. This is one step that appears to be missing in the design of the programme, as we have argued in the last chapter. There is an assumed problem and need on the part of schools, which may indeed be the case, but this needs to be made more explicit to parents, and the time taken to jointly develop an agreed approach and practices.

Timperley and Robinson make clear that partners must have a shared understanding of the task, and that this needs to be made explicit. They illustrate from a study in Britain where Edwards and Warin (1999) found it difficult to discern what exactly schools wanted the parents to contribute in a five-year parent-school collaboration, and for what purpose. We would also have to ask as a result of our research, whether schools do make sufficiently explicit to parents in this programme, what the problem is and what it is they are hoping to achieve, apart from a broad aim to raise student's literacy achievement. Teachers and parents need to co-develop their aims right from the very beginning, and then negotiate how each partner will go about working together to achieve them.

Power issues are important to address in partnerships, especially the assumption that power should be equal between the partners. Todd and Higgins' (1998) argue that in any given situation a complex power hierarchy is likely to be operating, and that equal power is rarely possible between teachers and parents for example, because each has different roles, interest, time available, expertise and legal responsibilities. They propose then a concept of 'joint endeavour' as

a useful way at looking at the power issues involved in relationships, because it will assist partners to recognise and utilise these differences in accomplishing a task, rather than insisting on equal power.

We found that the nature of partnership was interpreted quite variably by schools in the implementation of the programme. This is hardly surprising, as Bastiani concluded back in 1987:

> Partnership is a term widely used throughout the education service, to cover a range of situations and circumstances. Its use, or overuse, is more often than not uncritical, implying that it is highly desirable, unproblematic and easily attainable. (p. 103)

HSP:L understandings of partnership were investigated through exploring the perceptions and experiences of parents/families about their involvement in the programme and the impact on their children's attitudes to literacy learning. The perceptions of principals, lead teachers and lead parents, and other parents involved, were also canvassed, about the nature and effects of the home-school partnership they have been able to establish.

Partnerships with whom?

The HSP:L programme can involve different groups within a school community, in fact the original programme was designed to specifically involve parents from Pacific nations. More recently it has been widened to involve more groups of parents depending on how the schools choose to implement the programme. Approximately two-thirds of the schools surveyed (71 percent) invited all the parents in their school community to the HSP:L sessions, while 40 percent decided to invite parents from specified ethnic groups to run the sessions in their first languages. Some did both.

The original HSP:L model, designed as a Pacific initiative, invited families' to use their first languages in sessions for three reasons, firstly as the most effective and comfortable communication mode for these parents; secondly to acknowledge the value teachers recognise in parents using their first language with their children for literacy development; and thirdly to demonstrate school's commitment and intention to welcome families in appropriate cultural ways who may have felt intimidated by the dominant Pakeha culture of schools.

The underpinning principles of the HSP:L programme of using a strength-based approach, distinguish it from some other programmes or initiatives developed to align the home and school more closely together, where the parents of children who are underachieving in literacy are targeted.

Two of the case study schools targeted their Pacific families only, in implementing the HSP:L programme, and used the folder and training as it was originally designed. It worked very well for these schools and their families. It became clear that while this model was tailor-made for Pacific, especially Island born parents, it did not work as successfully for other schools where all parents were invited, without schools making a number of adaptations to the content of the sessions.

Many New Zealand school communities have undergone huge demographic changes recently with increased numbers of culturally diverse families enrolling. Many families are new migrants with limited or no English language, and schools are finding the HSP model an effective way of establishing relationships with these families, particularly by using the lead parent as the liaison point.

Table 15   **Difficult to engage parents**

The HSP:L programme:	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Missing (n=49) %
Welcomed into the school parent groups who were previously difficult to engage.	31	41	18	4	6

Table 15 illustrates that approximately three quarters of the respondents (72 percent) said the programme had helped welcome into the school parent groups who were previously 'difficult to engage'.

However, because of the different explanations we had received in the case study schools to what schools meant by 'difficult to engage', we were alerted to the need to establish what was meant by this term. We therefore asked in the survey, which groups of parents predominantly did not attend the sessions, and as reported in Chapter 2, a small number of schools mentioned Mäori and Pacific parents and parents with children who were 'struggling'. Wanting to explore this further, we asked about the challenges that schools thought might have prevented a higher number of parents from attending. Busy parents with little time or other commitments, was the most frequently cited reason.

These results backed up the reasons for non-attendance we had heard mentioned in the case study schools. Parents in the case study schools were so busy working that it was difficult to get them to attend any meetings at school, so it was not surprising that this was the biggest challenge. As a result, the case study schools had gone to a lot of trouble to try to fit sessions around busy parents' lives, often with the elongation of their own working day. However, even with these strategies it was impossible to accommodate everyone, such as where parents worked shift work and crossed over childcare and employment responsibilities. A mother at one case study school told us she and her husband had been unable to attend the parent sessions because their shift work always clashed with the times. Her father had come in their place, and he had been so impressed with the programme, he had convinced her to change her job so she could spend more time with her children. She now works as a teacher-aide at the school.

There were a number of 'other' reasons for parents' non-attendance including:

• 'lack of confidence, lack of interest, apathetic attitude' (4 responses);
• 'some didn't feel it suited their needs, reluctant or uncomfortable for some reason to be involved' (3 responses);

- 'parents came as long as free food and raffles were provided' (2 responses).
- 'many parents consider school is for teachers and students' (2 responses);
- 'language barrier/not really understanding what sessions were about and how important their input is, no matter to what degree' (1 response); and
- 'value placed on education' (1 response).

Some of these reasons resonated with what we had heard in the case study schools. Pacific families at two schools told us about the differences in role and status of teachers in the Islands, who are traditionally held in very high esteem as being 'the expert'. They said it was not a parent's place to question them or offer insights into their child's learning, and they expected teachers to know what was best for their child's learning. These parents said they found it difficult to think about New Zealand teachers differently and to speak to them on a more equal basis. Several said they felt shy to talk to the teacher. This seemed to be a valid reason why partnerships need to be thought about very carefully. If schools are not aware of cultural reasons underlying some of their Pacific families' practices, then no amount of newsletters home will make any difference. The two case study schools were very aware and the HSP:L programme with its focus on Pacific cultures was the ideal framework to use to build partnerships with these families. Where survey respondents however, used phrases such as 'lack of interest, apathetic attitude' (as above), we felt there could be misinterpretation about parent's motives. Partnership requires two groups valuing the interaction and activity.

How the partnership was construed

Eighty six percent of survey respondents said they had established a 'caring working partnership between school staff and the community'. There were four main themes in respondents' understanding of partnerships with parents.

The first was about teachers and parents working together towards a common goal, using phrases such as 'common goals', 'working together', 'sharing responsibility', and 'equal standing' (85 percent of responses). Responses that were typical of this included:

> - Working together towards a common goal

> - Working together where parents are seen, considered to be experts, their personal, skills, experiences are valued and utilised to help benefit their child's education. Parents become part of the "we" group. (child, teacher, parent)

> - Working alongside parents to:

> i) upskill parents with literacy understanding that they then can implement/reinforce at home
> ii) gain insight, understanding and knowledge on how teachers/schools can bring into the classroom, the 'strengths' of be homes.

The second theme was about relationships (7.5 percent of responses), and included responses such as:

- A relationship that supports student learning. Building relationships that foster the teacher's relationship with the child.

The third theme was rather paternalistic and talked about 'giving parents skills and confidence' (5 percent of responses), such as:

- Giving parents skills to help their children and giving them confidence to discuss their child's learning with the classroom teacher.

The final theme was about fundraising and the charter (2.5 percent).

This indicates that a significant proportion of schools involved in this programme have understood and are developing partnerships with parents that are consistent with the challenges about partnerships identified in the resource folder. However, the self-reporting aspect led us to triangulate this with other data obtained from the survey. We asked how often parents shared ideas in the HSP:L sessions about their children's literacy. Forty-five percent of respondents said that this happened often, 33 percent said it happened sometimes and 18 percent said it happened very often. We also asked how often teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents, and more (51 percent) said they sometimes did, than the 31 percent who said it happened often, or the 8 percent who said it happened very often. Six percent said it hardly ever or never happened.

These figures suggest the take-up of information may not be happening as much for teachers as it is for parents, so we asked how important these things were. Again, 73 percent of school survey responses said it was very important that parents shared ideas about children's literacy, but only 47 percent felt it was very important that teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents.

Perhaps this imbalance is because partnerships are still evolving and the trust and understandings of each respective party are still developing. While school principals and lead teachers (survey respondents) mainly hold ultimately hopeful and respectful notions of partnership in their minds, it may take some time to achieve this and for teachers to understand the need to learn from parents.

Another triangulation of how these partnerships were being played out, can be seen in the contribution of each of the partners in the sessions and how this changed over the course of the six sessions. Figure 4 illustrates this.

Figure 4 **Partner contribution in sessions**
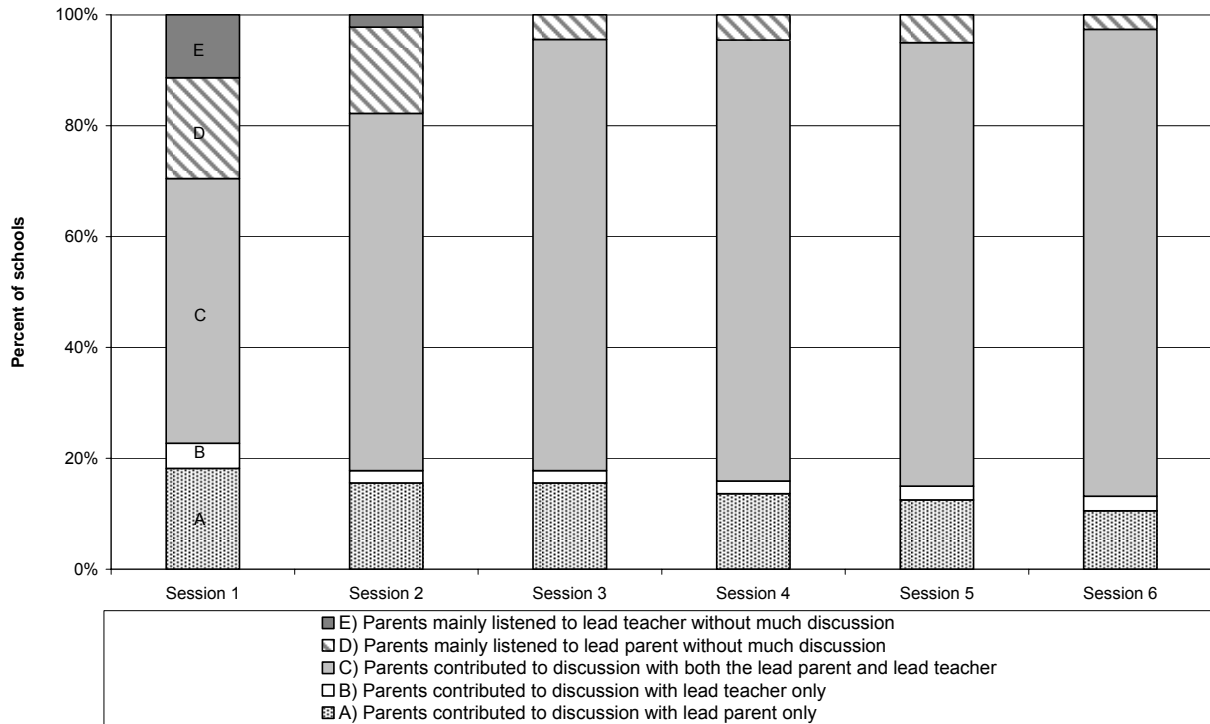
This graph is drawn from the responses to a survey item which asked the respondent to think about how parents were involved in each of the HSP:L sessions and how this might have changed over time. As we do not expect that everybody remembered exactly what happened in each individual session it is the overall pattern that we were interested in. Some respondents only selected one of the above options for each session, whereas others ticked more than one. For the purpose of analysis, we put the response options into hierarchy from the facilitation style aligned with most active parent involvement (A – Parents contributed to discussion with lead parent only) to the facilitation style aligned with the least active parent involvement (E – Parents mainly listened to the lead teacher without much discussion). If respondents ticked more than one option, we gave them the benefit of doubt and used their "more active" response on the hierarchy to produce the graph[5].

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[5] The numbers were so high for C (parents contributed to discussion with both the lead parent and lead teacher) that we decided to rank this last, but keep it visually in the centre, for two reasons. Firstly because with all the other options the respondent had to decide whether communication was mostly with one party or another and therefore the "both" response could be a "catch all" for people who did not choose one party over another. Secondly, we did not want the high number of responses on this item to "swamp" items lower on the hierarchy.

Lead teacher as facilitator

The style of lead teacher facilitation is illustrated in this graph, where the lead teacher takes a more dominant role in the first early sessions and then scaffolds the lead parent and other parents to take on more of the discussion time as the sessions progressed. This scaffolding was borne out in the case study schools also, where lead parents told us about their nervousness at the first sessions:

> When I first came on board I felt inadequate, I'm not a teacher, not trying to be a teacher – but trying to encourage other parents – felt unusual – I'm not subbing for teachers. I felt other people would be thinking 'who are these guys telling us what to do with their kids?' But home-school partnerships is breaking the barriers – its an ongoing process to develop the partnership. (Lead parent)

However, we also heard how they had overcome this and grown in confidence as time went on:

> It was equal footing at the training – couldn't tell who was [lead] teacher and who was [lead] parent. By the last two sessions the teachers were twiddling their thumbs – making the afternoon tea. (Lead Teacher)

And by the end of the series of sessions there were many reports of lead parents moving into new employment, or just shifting in their status in the community:

> The [lead parents] also got a lot of mana from the community. They are now seen as an intermediary between the wider Pacific community and the school for some people (Lead teacher).

Parent participation

The graph also shows that the greatest increase over the session series was in parents contributing equally to discussions with both the lead teacher and the lead parent. What is clear is that there was a clear drop off in parents mainly *listening* to the lead parent(s) or lead teacher(s) over the series (with the latter disappearing altogether). We had expected to see a greater increase in parents contributing to discussions *mainly* with lead parents, but the graph shows that lead teachers stayed fairly prominent in the sessions, albeit possibly as listeners and at a lesser rate than lead parents.

Partners learning about each other

A further set of questions asked were about how important it was for parents to learn about the school culture and how important it was for teachers to learn about the parents' culture. On this there was absolute agreement and 61 percent of survey respondents said it was very important for both. Yet, case studies showed that while this may have been a partnership aim and considered important, in fact what generally happened was, parents learnt more about the school culture than most of the teachers learnt about parents' cultures. When we asked whether teachers learnt about parents' cultures at the case study schools the response was usually a polite silence. One teacher at

a case study school said, 'It's not a real partnership yet – not equal, but it's a beginning'. Another principal spoke about the school's aim of working as a team with parents. He said:

> It's essential that parents and the school work together. That's a strength of the school – we have great parental involvement. Now I'm on a first name basis with parents – little steps.

Both of these examples illustrate the enormity of the task to establish genuine partnerships with parents, and that getting parents' trust and developing relationships does indeed take small steps. It would be unrealistic to expect that an equal partnership was developed after one HSP:L programme, but it certainly is a useful approach to begin the process of establishing the sorts of partnerships with parents where they are contributing to teacher's understanding of their children's literacy development.

Which relationships improved?

The different groups that worked together during the course of the HSP:L programme had varying amounts of time together, so we expected different degrees of relationships to develop, such as lead teachers and lead parents. We expected their relationships was likely to be a strongly developing one. Other teachers in the school may or may not have met the parents who attended the sessions, depending on how the school set up and implemented the sessions. The relationships between groups and whether these had improved as a result of the programme are illustrated in Table 16:

Table 16 **The extent the relationship improved between groups in the HSP:L programme**

	A lot	Quite a bit	A little bit	Not much at all	Don't know	Missing
Lead teachers and lead parents	53	37	2	4		4
Lead parents and parents that attended	20	59	8	4	2	6
Lead teachers and parents that attended	35	51	12			2
Other teachers and parents that attended	10	47	22	6	4	10
School leaders and parents that attended	14	51	22		2	10
School staff and parents generally (not just those that attended sessions)	10	41	22	14	6	6
Students and their teachers	12	39	29	6	6	8

As predicted the lead parent/teacher relationship was the one that developed the most. This finding was endorsed by the case study schools:

> Between the school and lead parents it was a partnership. With [other] parents generally it's in infancy. It has been the first flush of enthusiasm but will take a while for four communities to come on board. (Lead teacher from school in network reviewed school).

However, the relationship between the lead teacher and all the parents who attended was also one that moderately improved, as did the relationships between the lead parent and parents, and the senior management (school leaders) and parents. Case study findings reflected these patterns as well.

Approximately a quarter of the respondents (27 percent) said other relationships had also improved as a result of the programme. These included relations between the school and the church, the ESOL teacher, the RTLB, the board of trustees, rugby club members, Pacific groups and local early childhood organisations. Comments about the impact of the HSP programme on parental involvement on the board of trustees, included:

> We didn't used to need to hold BOT elections as so few parents stood and all were European. Currently we have 8 people standing - 1 Samoan, 3 Niuean, 2 Mäori, 2 European.

> Our BOT had a HSP meeting last week to promote the elections. We do our Health consultation, reporting to the community, curriculum evenings all through the HSP model. We found something that really works for our community so we use it to deliver all communication through.

Effectiveness of the partnerships

Schools were asked in the survey to rate the overall effectiveness of the HSP:L programme to improve partnerships between their school and its parent communities. Eighty one percent said it was effective, with 59 percent saying it was *very e*ffective. It seems that many principals and lead teachers see this is a highly effective and powerful tool or framework to use in the often difficult task of engaging and working with parents towards improving student achievement.

> The HSP:L programmes were very effective. They should continue to be funded by the Ministry. Direct way to engage with parents in relation to students learning and other areas

> As you can see from this response. I have high regard for this programme and it's content. The idea of home school partnerships are critical and integral to learning. One of the issues is it is difficult to get the families on board who need it most. Our school has many different ethnic groups and it would be valuable to run the programme for all.

> We wouldn't waste our time trying to communicate in any other way.

> Parents sharing their understanding of literacy and endorsing what they have learnt from the HSP:L towards their children's learning at home, that is "practical ways of teaching their children to learn". Some parents comments: "We feel part of the school".

Partnership: Issues

Bicultural and multicultural partnerships

Our evaluation of the HSP:L programme shows that this approach is ideally suited to diverse cultural groups, and through the model of linking schools with parents through a lead parent from the cultural group, and using first languages in the parent sessions, there is the beginning of strong bicultural and multicultural partnerships being established. Nearly three quarters of the schools surveyed felt they had managed to include the parents who are traditionally 'difficult to engage' through the implementation of the HSP:L programme. This would include parents from ethnic groups who spoke languages other than English.

Partnership outcomes

The quality and type of home-school partnerships established as a result of the HSP:L programme is a positive outcome for this programme. Survey results indicated that a majority of schools (85 percent) involved in this programme believe they are on the way to developing partnerships with parents that value parental input about their child. These same schools also believe they have developed ways of working together and sharing knowledge towards a common goal of raising their child's literacy achievement. We suggest that while schools may be aiming for this end, they are not there yet. Defining the parent's responsibility in achieving the task seemed relatively straight forward in the sessions our participants talked about, but the teacher's role of learning from the parents appeared to be less clear. It would seem important for schools to think about using a 'joint endeavour' type of concept such as Todd and Higgins' (1998) suggest, as a useful way of assisting both partners to accomplish their tasks.

Overall though, the types of partnerships described in the majority of schools illustrated that they have adopted practices that are consistent with productive and appropriate forms of partnership identified in the literature. Only five percent of the surveyed schools appeared to be interpreting the partnership from a dominant, power position and as a one-way transmission model from the school to the home, as evident in their response that it was important: "to give parents skills to help their children". This approach appeared to view the notion of partnership as one that will result in improved academic achievement as long as parents follow and practice what teachers say. As Fine (1997) says, the problem with this type of partnership is that it is not 'power-neutral'. Her concern more generally is that in Britain the discourse of parent empowerment and involvement has become a 'promiscuous' invitation to parents to fix the deficit-ridden sphere of public education. Other theorists have gone as far as calling this type of partnership a mechanism of control rather than empowerment of parents (Vincent and Tomlinson 1997) and Edwards and Warin (1999) argue that 'collaboration between the home and school seems to have been superceded by the colonisation of the home by the school' . The New Zealand HSP:L model needs to continue to emphasize its parent empowerment focus, so that it cannot be interpreted as a 'mechanism of control'.

4.   Literacy Impact

Introduction

The HSP:L programme is intended to build on and extend the professional learning about literacy that schools have been focused on prior to implementation. It is intended that once teachers are familiar with new understandings, knowledge and practices from in-depth literacy professional development, they will be in a better position to involve parents. We wanted to know whether the schools that had taken part in the HSP:L programme over the last 6 years had in fact had school-wide in-depth literacy professional development. The majority of schools (96 percent) had been involved in in-depth literacy PD at some stage - 55 percent before they took on the HSP:L and 41 percent after they did the programme.

The third key aspect of this evaluation was to investigate the literacy impacts of the HSP:L programme on students' and parents' understandings and teachers' literacy programmes. The broad research questions explored participants' perceptions about the impact:

- What impact do the adult participants think parental involvement as a result of the HSP programme, has had on children's opportunities to learn?
- How do adult participants perceive the programme to have impacted on students' literacy learning and achievement in and out of school, e.g., engagement, interest, enthusiasm?
- How do students view the impact of the HSP programme? What changes at home and school have occurred for them in terms of opportunities, how they feel about literacy experiences, their engagement, interest, enthusiasm?

This chapter discusses:

- The literacy learning that occurred at the sessions between parents and teachers;
- The literacy impact of the programme on parents, students and teachers; and
- Changes to teachers' literacy programmes.

The literacy learning that occurred at the HSP:L sessions

Sharing of ideas
Even although the HSP:L programme is designed to encourage a learning partnership between teachers and parents, the opportunity to share ideas about children seems important.

Approximately three quarters of the respondents thought it was very important that they shared ideas about children's literacy learning.

Table 17 illustrates how often this occurred:

Table 17 **Occurrence of teachers and parents sharing ideas about children's literacy learning**

How often:	Very often %	Often %	Sometimes %	Hardly ever/never %	Missing (n=49) %
lead teachers shared ideas about children's literacy learning	59	33	4	0	4
lead parents shared ideas about children's literacy learning	27	51	14	4	4
parents shared ideas about children's literacy learning	18	45	33	0	4

Lead teachers shared ideas about children's literacy learning most often, followed by lead parents, with parents reported as doing this less often than the other two groups. These patterns are hardly surprising. The HSP programme however, aims to disrupt this paradigm and attempts to facilitate a much more equal relationship between teacher and parent, where the parent's expertise is acknowledged as more knowledgeable about cultural and home literacy practices, which is listened to and integrated into teachers' understandings. The evidence suggests that there are still differences between the frequency of parents' and teachers' sharing of their expertise, indicating that there is still some way to go towards achieving this aim. Clearly the traditional roles of teacher and parent are still needing to be re-negotiated on the matter of sharing knowledge and ideas, with the lead parent's role as pivotal in providing a bridge for this to happen.

Learning about children's literacy

Table 18 illustrates in even more detail how infrequently teachers learnt from parents about children's literacy.

Table 18   **Occurrence of teachers and parents learning about children's literacy from each other**

How often: n=49	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever/never	Missing
	%	%	%	%	%
teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents	8	31	51	6	4
parents learnt about children's literacy from Lead parents	14	43	33	4	6
parents learnt about children's literacy from Lead teachers	39	45	10	0	6
Parents learnt from each other	33	33	29	2	4

Other data showed that approximately half the respondents (47 percent) thought it was very important that teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents, but more (69 percent) thought it was very important that parents learnt from lead teachers. Interestingly, more (63 percent) also thought it was very important for parents to learn from *other* parents than from the *lead* parents (55 percent).

It is important to remember in interpreting this data that it is the view only of the person/s who filled in the survey – mainly lead teachers and/or principals. It is probably not surprising that they would rate the role of the teaching professional above the parent in the matter of *learning*, which is indeed how they have reported the questions in table 18, whereas the data about *sharing* ideas about children's learning from table 17 reveals they are more prepared to accept that parents may have some knowledge here. What is puzzling is the way professionals viewed the role of the lead parent as someone to learn from. Respondents felt parents learnt more from *other* parents than lead parents, and that this was more important.

The following graph (Figure 5) brings together the findings discussed in the chapter so far in a summarized and ranked form. The statements in Table 19 relate to each of the circled letters on the graph, which are placed on the horizontal frequency line showing how often they occurred and on the vertical priority line showing how important they were considered to be by the survey respondents. The number one represents the least, and ten the most, for example, "A" happens most often and is ranked as most important.

Table 19   **Statements about sharing and learning**

Code	Statements
A	Lead Teachers shared ideas about children's literacy learning
B	Lead Parents shared ideas about children's literacy learning
C	Parents shared ideas about children's literacy
D	Teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents
E	Parents learnt about children's literacy from Lead Parents
F	Parents learnt about children's literacy from Lead Teachers
G	Parents learnt about school culture
H	Teachers learnt about community/parents' cultures
I	Parents learnt from each other
J	The sessions were run in a way that reflected your school culture
K	The sessions were run in a way that reflected parents' culture

Figure 5   **Importance and frequency of sharing and learning about children's literacy learning**
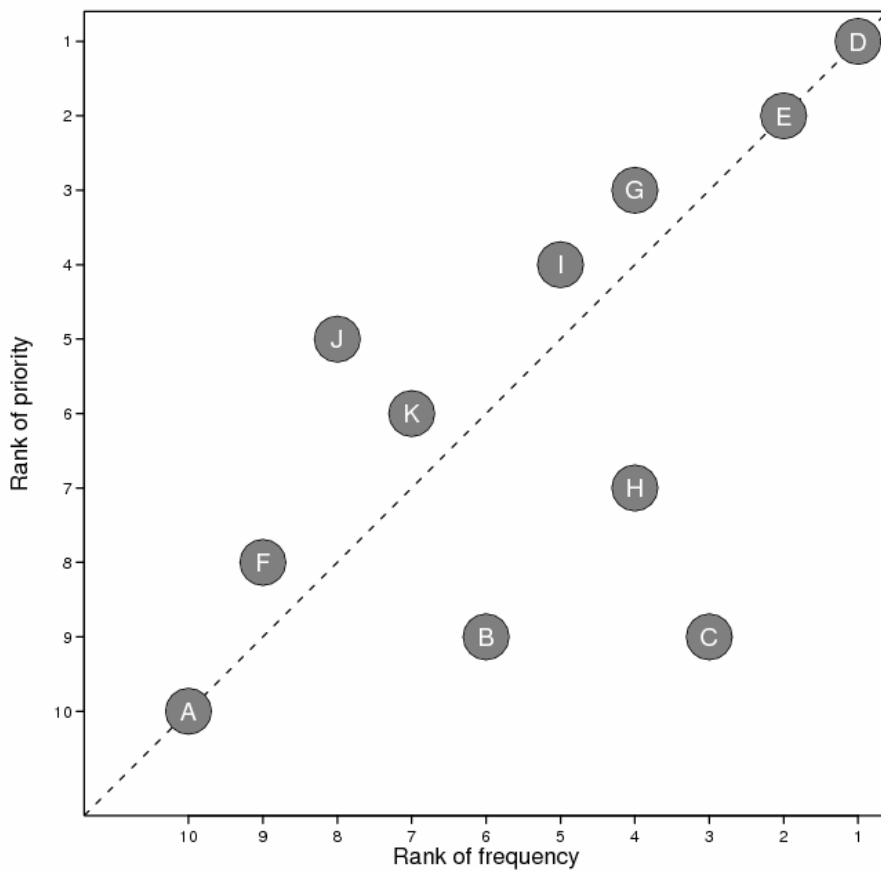
The analysis presented in the graph differs from the above tables in that it uses ranked scores. To get the rankings, the response given for each statement was averaged. The average scores were then ranked from 10 (the statement that rated as the highest average priority) to 1 (the statement that rated as the lowest average priority). The same process was used for how often each statement occurred, so 10 on the frequency scale means that, on average, this practice happened more than any other statement across all survey respondents6.

The graph tells us that overall the statement "A - Lead teachers shared ideas about children's literacy learning" was rated both the most important and it occurred the most frequently. At the other end, "D - Teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents" was rated, on average, as least likely to happen and was judged (by principals and lead teachers it must be remembered) as the least important for children's literacy development. Perhaps, more interesting are the letters that do not sit along the diagonal line – this means that their ranking on the importance/priority scale did not match their ranking on the frequency scale. For example, "C- Parents shared ideas about students' literacy" happened comparatively infrequently, but was ranked as important. On the opposite side of the diagonal line, we find that "J – the sessions that were run in a way that reflected your school culture" was ranked near the middle in terms of importance, but fairly high in terms of the frequency at which it occurs. This statement, and some of the general messages from this graph, are considered further on in this report.

The key messages that both the tables and the graph are giving are that teachers think it is important that they share ideas about children's literacy learning with parents, and that parents learn from them – and this happened often in the sessions, but they do not think it is important for them to learn from parents about children's literacy learning, and this didn't happen often in the sessions. They qualified this by saying they thought it was important that parents shared ideas, but what is implied is that teachers have nothing to learn from these ideas.

Overview of literacy impact

In the survey we asked the respondents (principals/lead teachers) what impact they considered the HSP:L programme had had for parents, students and teachers, by specifying key understandings about literacy learning in its broadest form. The development of questions (see Table 20) was informed by the case study responses. We report the survey responses **for** each group, and the case study responses **of** each group, separately.

Teachers' views of parents (from survey)

Seventy-five percent of respondents overall, felt that the programme had been very successful for parents. Over 50 percent said it had had major positive impact on three aspects below.

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6 Ranked scores do not tell us how much something happens or how important it was, it does tell us where each 'something that happens' fits on a continuum from least to most (from first to tenth).

Table 20   **Impacts of the HSP:L on parents' practices**

	Major positive impact		Minor positive impact		Don't know/No impact		Negative impact		No response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Parents' understanding of key literacy messages	25	51	19	39	4	8	-	-	1	2	49	100
Parents' increased use of their first language at home	20	41	14	29	13	27	-	-	2	4	49	100
Parents' use of new literacy ideas at home	21	43	19	39	8	16	-	-	1	2	49	100
Parent's confidence in talking about literacy at the sessions	25	51	18	37	5	10	-	-	1	2	49	100
Parents' taking more time to talk with and listen to their children	25	51	15	31	8	16	-	-	1	2	49	100
Parents' taking more time to read with their children	24	49	16	33	8	16	-	-	1	2	49	100

These three aspects include parents' understanding of key literacy messages; parent's confidence in talking about literacy at the sessions; and parents talking and listening to their children more.

Fifty-three percent of respondents added other positive impacts for parents in written feedback, which included:

- Parents feeling more comfortable visiting the school and coming into the school at other times more readily after the HSP, such as attending meetings (13 responses);
- Parents slowly gaining confidence to express and share concerns, and realizing that issues they had with their children's literacy were the same as others had (12 responses); and
- Improved consultation and participation in education decision making (4 responses).

Parents' views (from case study schools)

Pacific parents from the case study schools told us they were surprised to find out they should be speaking in their first language at home. They believed that as schooling and exams were all in English in New Zealand, they were disadvantaging their children by speaking their first language. At one school Pacific Island fathers were still not convinced about this as the lead parent who had told them was a mother and they did not believe her to be an 'expert'. The mothers in the group were much more ready to accept the explanations she had given them. However, in most of the

case study schools parents reported speaking to their children more in their first language at home and were proud to do so. As one parent said:

> Whatever your language is in the house, first and foremost, keep speaking it. I never used to speak Mäori to my son, but now I'm speaking that to him. His English is perfect now which is good – best of both worlds.

At all the parent focus groups we heard how parents were now taking their role of reading, talking, and listening to their children much more seriously, and had changed many family routines such as meal times, television times and bedtimes to do so. Again many seemed surprised that this was so important to the development of their child's literacy development. At one school a parent told us how he got very emotional as the session went on. He said, "I have not been doing this". Parents said they were surprised and shocked at how little talking and reading they did, but how easy it is. They didn't at first realise that singing Pacific songs was part of literacy. One parent talked about how he was working towards having more in-depth conversations with his daughter. The types of things he had done included turning off the television over meal times, trying different ways of asking questions – like instead of asking "how was your day?" asking "what was the best thing about your day?" When his daughter didn't initially take up the conversation, he would ask his wife instead. Then as their conversation got more animated the girl was drawn in because she didn't want to miss out.

Teachers' views of students

Table 22 shows survey respondents were more guarded in their responses about the impact of the HSP:L programme on students than they were on the parents.

Table 21   **Impacts of the HSP:L on children's practices**

	Major positive impact		Minor positive impact		Don't know/No impact		Negative impact		No response		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Children's increased use of their first language at home	11	22	18	37	18	37	-	-	2	4	49	100
Children's increased use of their first language at school	6	12	23	47	18	37	-	-	2	4	49	100
Children's increased literacy achievement	9	18	27	55	12	25	-	-	1	2	49	100
Children's increased engagement in literacy practices	14	29	23	47	10	20	-	-	2	4	49	100
Children's more positive attitude towards learning	18	37	20	41	10	20	-	-	1	2	49	100
Children's growing confidence in their self/abilities	18	37	16	33	14	29	-	-	1	2	49	100

More were prepared to say the programme had had a *minor* positive impact on the various aspects than a *major* positive impact. This is understandable considering the fact that the programme works directly with parents and not children, and as one respondent said:

> [It is] extremely difficult to make judgments regarding effect on change. We have so many literacy programmes at school that there is no real proof of what makes a difference.

It would also be unrealistic to expect that the HSP:L programme impacts directly on student literacy achievement as an immediate outcome. The purpose of the programme is to provide an environment conducive to children developing developmentally appropriate communication and literacy skills, by drawing on and sharing the combined expertise and understandings of both parents and teachers. Providing an environment which enables children to grow in confidence about their own languages and oracy skills, to widen their interest, enthusiasm and enjoyment of literacy activities are important outcomes of this programme, with the expectation that these things will contribute to enhanced literacy achievements in the longer term. A teacher from one of the case studies said:

> The successes are hard to measure. You wouldn't say that the achievement level for Pacific students has really jumped up, but what you find is that they are finding us more approachable, they come up and chat, their mana has improved. In the class they put their hands up, even tell teachers when they think you're wrong. This has come from increased confidence, giving value to it. Its cool now. (lead teacher)

The most critical question in this table is probably about children's increased literacy achievement. While over half of the survey respondents (55 percent) said there was a minor positive impact, only 18 percent said there had been a major positive impact. This still seems to be a high rating for a programme that does not directly work with these children. While most schools do not have hard data and test results to show increased achievement from this programme, they do seem to be seeing results. The case studies illuminated some of the successes more vividly. A lead teacher at one school described the changes in one student:

> We can't say that this programme has yet increased literacy (we hope it will in the future). But there is one example of a student who has dramatically increased her literacy because of the programme. I'm not sure when she got to New Zealand but she had very little English language. She was 14, surly, and older than the other kids. Our kids were fantastic. In Session Two she came along to the session done up to the nines. Now she's talking, she's communicating. She even did a three minute speech. Other students have got more skills and confidence, and they are reading at home. But her experience really shows what the programme has done for her reading and writing. She also had a teacher aide. She's now translating Samoan books. She smiles, you can have a joke with her. She's joined Kapa Haka and the Pasifika group. Her mum comes along, and she floats around families when her mum is working in the group. I think it's because her mum was involved. She sat with her mum at the beginning. For her and other students, it was seeing the staff in another context. They were sitting with them, eating with them, and even allowed in the staff room. (lead teacher)

One of the case study schools had started to collect literacy data. They had end of year data in literacy and had set targets for the year the HSP:L programme took place. The principal stated that their results show the children are moving towards these targets, and one teacher in the focus group said:

> It shows in the running records of reading – there are big improvements in achievement. Also attitudes have changed. Combined with asTTle results we can see that the children are more eager to learn. Attendance has improved since the Home-school programme. Parents are talking to each other out of school and sharing this knowledge. Children are able to articulate what they are learning. The parents have shared it in one class, even when they didn't attend.

Others in the case studies were a little more circumspect:

> Its too early to say whether children are making significant progress in literacy. However teachers have noticed children in the library going to their own language books and they have observed these children showing Palangi child their books and telling them about their Pacific island. (Teachers' focus group)

In the survey we asked whether there had been any other positive impacts for students. Respondents were equally divided over the question about whether there were. Forty-three percent said there were and 43 percent said there were not. Written feedback about other positive impacts included:

- Children's sense of pride their parents were involved (6 responses);

  Children engaged with parents in reading sessions at school and enjoyed and were proud to show their parents what they did at school in the school setting

- Children's increased confidence in oracy and more focused learning (3 responses); and

- Children's improved relationship with teachers (2 responses).

  Relationships improved, more responsive and comfortable with teachers who worked, attended the sessions in same way. E.g. providing child care, food etc.

Student voices from the case studies

Overall students were aware that their parents had attended the sessions, even the five year olds in the new entrant case study, and they made positive comments about what had happened as a result of their parent's participation in the programme.

For many students the sessions were a social event that they enjoyed as a family outing where they did different activities in the school. Most of the schools provided enjoyable supervised activities for the children while their parents were at the sessions. One school held a school performance to encourage parents to come. Others involved students in some of the reading sessions and another in a guided tour of learning stations set up in the hall which students took their parents round. Many of the schools provided a meal at each session and in one school the

staff hosted the meals for the families in the staffroom. The Pacific Island students at this school talked a lot about this:

> It [the sessions] was PI time. Coming together was really cool. We had food first – I didn't like the apple crumble. Only liked the ice-cream. The teachers were generous by paying for the food. They talked to our parents about us.

Students also talked about the changes that had happened at home as a result of their parents attending the HSP:L programme. Many talked about speaking their first language more:

> My dad wouldn't help us with our homework cos he doesn't speak English well, but now he does.

> Translating, helping parents. My grandma asks me words from the newspaper. The other Palängi kids ask us what our Tongan words mean.

> My mum encourages us to watch the news and talk about it in our languages.

> My older brother teaches us in Tongan with our home-work.

Others spoke about increased interaction with their parents around school literacy practices:

> Parents care about our homework now.

> After we got home from the HSP sessions we all talked about the things we did. Dad told us to go and type things up. Parents asked us what we did. We had a family meeting and then said our prayers. Mum asks me what I did today at school. These things didn't happen before.

> Reading to me at night, going to the library, listening to me read, asking me all these questions –I get annoyed with all these questions.

Some spoke about the changes in their own behaviour, attitudes and participation in class:

> I co-operate with the teachers more.

> I speak up because I know the answer and I am more confident. Literacy is now my favourite subject.

> It's fun. Writing has changed. We write our own prayers now. Groups mixed up with good and bad readers all together. Read a story with questions. We just had a spelling test - I got 97/100.

Survey respondents' views of other teachers

About half the survey respondents felt the HSP:L programme had had a minor positive impact on teachers on all variables except the use of children's first languages in class, and most replied that they did not know about this. Only 16 percent thought that there had been a major positive impact on teachers adaptation of classroom practices to accommodate children's out-of-school literacy practices and experiences.

Table 22 **Impacts of the HSP:L on teacher's practices**

	Major positive impact		Minor positive impact		Don't know/No impact		Negative impact		No response		Total	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Teachers' increased use of children's home languages in class	5	10	18	37	24	49	-	-	2	4	49	100
Teachers' understanding of children's home literacy practices and experiences	13	27	29	59	7	14	-	-	-	-	49	100
Teachers' understanding of parent's literacy background and contribution	15	31	25	51	9	18	-	-	-	-	49	100
Teachers' adaptation of classroom practices to accommodate children's out-of-school literacy practices and experiences	8	16	25	51	14	29	-	-	2	4	49	100

Other positive impacts reported by teachers included:

- Improved relationships between parents and teachers (9 responses).

- Teachers' valuing children's culture and their literacy experiences from that background (8 responses).

  > Increased respect for customs and language of ethnic groups and the appreciating of diversity in a multicultural school

- Continuing professional development in the school as a result of the HSP:L programme (3 responses).

  > HSP is discussed in 4 meetings a year (one per term). All manner of topics, activities, reporting are shared in this manner. Any school meeting is a HSP meeting.

- Teachers learning from parents (3 responses).

  > The development, sessions were very useful - shaving ideas and experiences. It was also good to be working alongside parents in a way not normally seen.

- Improved relationships with the community (4 responses).

One of the survey questions asked about other relationships which had improved, such as between ESOL teachers and other teachers as a result of the HSP:L programme. Five responses mentioned this as an improvement, particularly in relation to teacher's literacy understanding of ESOL groups of students, as the following two quotes illustrate:

Two ESOL teachers gave staff meetings for other teachers to assist with literacy strategies for ESOL and other children.

Using ethnic languages to communicate was the beginning of the form of communication. All attendees and helpers gained insights into the dimensions of ESOL teaching.

Case Study Responses

In the case study schools there were varied responses about how much impact the programme had on changing teacher's views about children and their families and their home literacy practices. A parent at one school didn't know whether it would have made much difference:

Interviewer: Do teachers understand your family and home literacy practices?

Parent: Only the lead teacher who listens in. She hears us discussing our home environment. Don't know what difference it has made though. (Parent focus group)

Students also didn't think teachers had learned much from the sessions:

Interviewer: Does the teacher know about your family?

Student 1: No (head shake) – not much – we're from a different country. (Holland)

Student 2: [It would] be good if they do because may be having a hard time at home.

Student 3: Teachers live in the town – not running a farm don't know what it feels like. (Student focus group)

A number of case study schools did not involve all their teachers in the programme so it would have been difficult to imagine how teachers' ideas about families would have changed if they were not listening at the sessions.

Changes to teachers' literacy programmes

According to the survey respondents, 39 percent of teachers and 16 percent of principals made changes to their literacy programmes on the basis of parents' feedback. Table 23 shows that over half (55 percent) strongly agreed that as a result of the HSP:L programme, families and teachers shared ways of working together to make an even greater impact on children's literacy development. However, only 18 percent strongly agreed that the programme increased teachers' abilities to incorporate students' out-of-school literacy experiences into classroom programmes and practices, and 45 percent strongly endorsed what teachers were already doing for children's literacy development.

Table 23　**The impact of the HSP:L on teachers' literacy practices**

The HSP:L programme:	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Missing (n=49) %
Increased teachers' understanding of literacy activities in the home, and ways of helping children learn	22	47	29	0	0	2
Increased teachers' abilities to incorporate students' out-of-school literacy experiences into classroom programmes and practices	18	37	33	4	2	6
Endorsed what teachers are already doing for children's literacy development	45	43	8	0	0	4
Shared ways in which families and teachers can work together to make an even greater impact on children's literacy development	55	35	6	2	0	2

Responses from the case study schools showed that where the school was not involving all the teachers in the programme, teachers told us they had not changed their literacy programme or practices. In fact in one school the DP from the middle school ran the sessions with parents from the new entrant room, and the new entrant teacher knew very little about what went on. In other schools there were between two to six lead teachers involved in the sessions, but few other teachers.

However, where the programme was run as a whole school initiative, teachers did report changes in practices. At one school the teachers claimed the advantages of the programme were that it gave teachers opportunities to meet Pacific parents; and helped open up lines of communication with them. The Director of Religious Studies said it was significant seeing parents in the school setting as opposed to the church setting, and she described the reversal of roles of parents and teachers at the sessions as important:

> Initially to see the teachers in a servant role in reality, in a role where they personally fed these people was extremely impacting. You know that we were in a servant role, that we were not 'God' on a teacher level. And then to see the teachers empowering the parents in their role as educators, it was just awesome. And to see the parents gain confidence to speak and to be listened to, it was very powerful. (Religious teacher in teachers' focus group)

A teacher at the same school said:

> During the programme I saw a different side to these families when I realised they were suffering after the King of Tonga died. It made me more aware of the current events and implications for these families. We all saw children interacting with children from other Pacific islands at the sessions – where there had been competition previously. We were learning [the] differences between Tongan and Samoan kids in our classes. It made us more

aware of PI children and we are learning more about their cultures. We are using PI languages more in greetings, counting, etc. [We are] looking for resources now about PI. Using examples in maths – eg. 50 men needed to carry Tongan King's casket at funeral. (Paraphrased conversation at the teachers focus group)

Another teacher at the same focus group said:

We found context was important in reading tests. Kids said the reading test about Samoa was easy. The more reading resources that have a familiar context the better. Journals are good. [We] need to include more PI language books in library. (Teachers focus group.)

Parents and students also backed up that changes had occurred at this school:

For my son, we feed back [information] to his teacher. For example, he's a visual person so sometimes drawing a diagram will help. Because they ask us if there are any problems – they come to us and we plan a solution together...My son is a lot happier because of our new way of approaching things – making it more fun. (Parent focus group).

Interviewer: Do your teachers relate to you differently?

Student: Yes there's more stuff that's specific to Pacific. Dads been helping with the war-dance. We have multicultures and we teach each other. Teachers help us. Five of us are involved in Kapahaka. Its really fun...

Interviewer: What is different in class now?

Student: The teachers didn't do things on PI but now they do. My teacher asks me to say things in Tongan, like greetings. Teachers ask us to decorate the alter. (Students focus group)

Families' contribution to literacy

We also asked survey respondents about families' influence and contribution to literacy development. Table 24 shows that 82 percent strongly agreed that parents and families are one of the greatest influences on children's learning and development.

Table 24 **The impact of families' contribution and influence to literacy development**

The HSP:L programme:	Strongly agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Missing (n=49) %
Reinforced that parents and families are one of the greatest influences on children's learning and development	82	14	4			
Endorsed what families are already doing for children's literacy development	22	59	10	4		4
Increased families' understanding of literacy and practical ways of helping children learn	51	43	4			2

The response to this set of questions appeared to indicate that schools felt parents were a very important influence on their children's learning, and that the HSP:L programme increased their understanding to contribute to this. The participants in the case studies were also clear about the importance of families' contribution to children's literacy. When a principal from one of the case study schools was asked what he thought about the Ministry's vital outcome for families and whänau, he said:

> It's essential, one of the better ones, and it will definitely make a difference to student achievement. It takes teacher's attitudes to change and acceptance of what its like in other families. We have a number of struggling families. Because the programme has gone so well some of the staff have a warmer attitude towards Pacific students. The better the rapport you have with your community, the better it is all round.

A teacher from another school said:

> Most parents thought it was the teacher's responsibility to teach their children. But now they take their responsibility. They had limited knowledge about the ways they could help their child but now they can help and it is fun. Take the time. Parents are now asking how to help their child. (Teachers focus group)

Literacy impact: Issues

Successes:

Parents' impact on children's literacy

Parental involvement in the HSP:L programme was seen by all participants in the research as highly effective in terms of impacting on students' literacy learning. Between 80–90 percent of the survey respondents felt parental involvement in the HSP:L programme had had a positive impact on children's opportunities to learn, and about half thought it had been a major positive impact. Parents were understanding key literacy messages, were talking, listening and reading more with their children at home, and they were using new literacy ideas at home more as a result of the programme. The teachers and parents in the case studies were also generally positive about the programme increasing students' opportunities to learn.

HSP:L impact on students

The impact on students was considered overall to have had a *minor* positive impact rather than a major positive impact. Nearly three quarters of the survey respondents (73 percent) perceived the programme to have impacted positively on students' literacy achievement in school. Fifty-five percent rated this as a minor positive change, and 18 percent as a major positive change. Three quarters (76 percent) also thought there had been positive impacts on children's increased engagement in literacy practices; 78 percent said there had been positive impacts on their attitudes

towards learning; and 70 percent said there has been positive impacts in children's growing confidence in their abilities.

Student voice

The focus groups of students were very positive about the impact of the programme on both their parent's and their own experiences. The youngest children (new entrants) understood their parents had come to school but were unable to compare before or after events in relation to the programme. Students from the other five schools were enthusiastic about their parents being more involved in the school, and about the changes that had occurred as a result of the programme in their own homes and sometimes in class.

Challenges:

One of the most important differences between the HSP:L programme and many other home-school programmes involving literacy, is the sharing and learning of information expected of both partners in the partnership. The resource folder quotes as the purpose of the programme, to:

- endorse what families and teachers are already doing for children's development, learning, and language; and

- share ways in which families and teachers working together can make an even greater impact on children's development, learning, and language. (Ministry of Education, 2003, p. 6)

To retain the optimum results from this programme, teachers are encouraged to listen to and learn from parents about their child's home literacy practices, so that from this enhanced understanding, they can then rethink and redesign their literacy programmes and practices in class if necessary. Parents are also encouraged to learn from teachers, ways of enhancing literacy practices at home. This is not a one-way programme where the school transmits its literacy messages to parents so that they can do things differently at home, as some schools are doing (McDowall and Boyd, 2005).

…for parents

The first challenge has been to engage parents to do this sharing of home-literacy practices. The strategies used in the programme to encourage the diverse groups of parents in New Zealand schools today, particularly by using lead parents, involving a whole-family approach, making families comfortable, and creating trusting relationships, appear to be working well according to the participants in our study. Parents were reported in the survey as sharing ideas about their children's literacy learning often (45 percent); very often (18 percent) and sometimes (33 percent). Case study participants also reported parents sharing ideas and becoming more confident about doing this as each session progressed.

…for teachers

The next challenge for this programme has been to engage teachers in learning from parents about their children's home-literacy practices. Our survey findings show that lead teachers appear to have done most of the sharing in the sessions, as 59 percent reported that lead teachers shared ideas very often, compared to lead parents (27 percent) and parents (18 percent). Lead teachers were reported to have learnt about children's literacy from parents less often than parents learnt from teachers (see Table 18). Another finding confirmed this by showing that 69 percent of the survey respondents thought it was very important that parents learnt from teachers, but only 47 percent thought it was as important for teachers to learn from parents. The final result from the survey that completes this picture is evident in Table 23 where more respondents agreed that the programme endorsed what teachers are already doing for children's literacy development (88 percent), than agreed that it had increased teachers' abilities to incorporate students' out-of-school literacy experiences into classroom programmes and practices (55 percent). The international research confirms this finding (Crozier and Reay 2005; Edwards and Warin 1999; Crozier and Davies 2007). Tett and colleagues (2001) found in a Scottish study of parent and school partnerships that whilst teachers were committed to involving parents they were not necessarily adept at sharing information with them.

…for schools

We believe that one of the problems contributing to the result of less than ideal teacher learning occurring, is because schools need to do this programme as a school-wide one, and if this doesn't happen, as it didn't in five out of the six case studies, then teachers are physically not there in the sessions to hear what parents are saying. On the other hand, there are good reasons not to have parent sessions dominated by teachers, and if the parent session is conducted in a language other than English, the likelihood is that many teachers would not know what was being said anyway. It seems to us there needs to be built in to the programme some mechanism for feedback from the parent groups to all the teachers/teacher aides at the school.

…for partnerships

In spite of the overall success of the programme in providing a framework to schools for establishing effective partnerships, there is more work to be done to strengthen the mutually democratic relationship between teachers and parents. If this partnership is about achieving the same goals of raising student literacy achievement, then both parties – parents and teachers – need to be contributing and listening to each other in a genuine way where they are both prepared to learn from each other, and change practices as a result. Teachers believe it is important that they share ideas about children's literacy learning with parents, and that parents learn from them, but they do not think it is as important for them to learn from parents. This finding suggests that some teachers may not consider they have much to learn from parents. They may listen, but not necessarily take on board what they hear. This raises questions about the importance of parents'

knowledge and teachers' knowledge, and the credibility of parents' voice and teachers' voice. Timperley and Robinson (2002, p. 21) advise that:

> In order to learn from such diversity, partners must seek information about each other's perspectives and adopt a critical stance towards their own views.

In the main parents have traditionally accepted and respected teachers' professional knowledge and authority, and teachers have got used to this being the case. But in the light of recent international research which links partnerships between schools and parents with students' higher academic achievement (Epstein 1996; Haynes and Ben-Avie, 1996; Street 1998; Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider and Lopez 1997), we suggest new learning for some teachers about what and who's knowledge counts, and the importance of learning from parents about their own children. Timperley and Robinson, (2002, p. 21), cite Lipman (1997) and add, 'One partner who is unaware of their own biases and dominance may define the task and process on their own terms and disregard the others' views'.

5. Sustainability

Introduction

The Ministry of Education funds the professional development of the HSP:L programme for one year. The programme is based on the premise that once a school has been through the initial training it will sustain the principles of partnership by adapting the programme to develop further sessions with parents in other or the same curriculum areas. We were interested in exploring how schools are sustaining parent involvement in their schools and investigating how the professional development providers (School Support Services) promote and support the HSP programme.

Sustaining home-school partnerships

The ability for schools to sustain HSP:L beyond the initial session series, was a key concern expressed to us by both the Ministry of Education and the schools we visited. Three-quarters of all schools surveyed (76 percent) said they had continued *some* aspect(s) of HSP:L beyond the first year. Ten (23 percent) of the 49 schools surveyed had run HSP:L more than once between 2001 and 2006. (Six had run it in two different school years, three had run it in three different years, and one had run it in four years). Table 25 shows the aspects associated with the programme which they have sustained:

Table 25   **Aspects of Home School Partnerships that schools have continued beyond HSP:L**

	Number of schools	Percent of schools
Ran other activities to involve parents in the school	21	43
Developed new sessions in curriculum areas other than literacy	19	39
Ran the Numeracy HSP programme	18	37
Developed new sessions in literacy	14	29

There were three key strategies schools have used to sustain the home-school partnership ideas:

1. Developed new sessions in literacy

Some schools had organized sessions on literacy specific to syndicates within the school, or had held parent reading sessions using experts within the school.

2. Developed new sessions in curriculum areas other than literacy

Some schools had developed HSP programmes using maths, writing, Heath and P.E., science, nutrition and key messages in other key curriculum areas, and one school wrote, "Everything we do is delivered through HSP".

3. Ran other activities to involve parents in the school

• Schools have involved parents in a variety of activities such as open days; a "Family Library"; multicultural practices for festival, fund raising, planning, and administration; and a parents' class run in conjunction with the refugee homework centre.

Comments of how schools were sustaining home-school partnerships

Seventy percent of the survey schools that had sustained some aspect of HSP selected at least two of the options in Table 25 above. The following responses indicate how some schools have used an HSP approach in an ongoing and multifaceted way:

• When I think of HSP I think of a much more global approach that has huge spin-offs across the education business. E.g. Health promoting schools, food policies, shade/sun-smart practices have all come out of having an effective HSP operating in our school. The focus should be on how we can run the most effective HSP programme and then use this powerful medium to develop a variety of areas such as literacy, numeracy, key competencies, etc.

• In 2004 we ran HSP:L., then in 2005 we maintained key literacy message (oracy) and developed sessions with other activities and ideas, such as numeracy activities. In 2006 we ran HSP Numeracy, and in 2007 developed HSP style-sessions driven by parents in numeracy, oracy, and literacy.

• We have run numeracy, literacy (including library) sessions for year 6 parents and involved intermediate and college staff. We also involved a youth aid officer and invited young adults to speak about their journeys. We regularly run year 0–1 parent sessions. This year we are part of HSP Numeracy.

• We have continued the HSP since we first began. It continues to run successfully between the various contracts. It has become a regular and powerful medium for our school and community to meet, learn and make decisions.

Four of our case studies were in their first year of working with HSP:L, and so had not had the opportunity to sustain aspects of the programme beyond the initial series. However, in order to maintain momentum, it was recognised there was a need for time to be put aside for schools and parents to brainstorm "where to next" following the completion of the given HSP:L series. The research focus group was identified as an opportunity to reflect on what had been achieved and to dream up future possibilities.

Barriers to sustaining partnerships beyond the initial series

A quarter (25 percent) of the survey schools had been unable to sustain any aspects of HSP:L. Another 42 percent had managed to continue some aspect but still cited barriers that had prevented them from sustaining other aspects. To put it another way, 33 schools (67 percent) recorded at least one barrier that had prevented them from continuing Home School Partnerships in some form, and more than half of these selected at least three of the issues in Table 26.

Table 26 **Issues that have prevented schools from continuing Home School Partnership in any form**

	Number of schools	Percent of schools
Competing initiatives/ school commitments	16	33
Lack of time	14	29
Out of school hours too demanding on school staff	14	29
Lack of funding	12	25
Workload for organising HSP:L is too high	12	25
Lack of enthusiasm from parents	9	18
No available lead parent	2	4
Lack of enthusiasm from teachers	1	2
Lack of enthusiasm from senior management	1	2
No available lead teacher	0	-
Other	13	27

While the most significant issues for schools that prevented sustaining HSP were school issues, such as competing initiatives and school commitments, lack of time and funding, and demands on staff in terms of workloads and out of school hours, the involvement and enthusiasm of parents were not seen as significant. The most notable "other" reasons given were that HSP:L was not entirely suitable for particular school communities and that staffing or principal changes had got in the way. Illustrative comments were:

• The package didn't really work well enough for use. Not flexible enough for our school.
• It needs to be adapted for each ethnicity that is targeted, for maximum value.
• [It needs to} provide content that engages our community.

One SSS advisor also said the size of the resource folder put off a number of schools that she was trying to interest in taking on the programme. It gives the appearance of too much extra work.

The most frequently cited challenge overall - competing initiatives and commitments - was a pressing concern in the case studies. For example, one principal shared the following:

> We get so much from the Ministry for professional development that it becomes really difficult to refresh a curriculum area... We have all different divisions of the Ministry being thrown at us. We're bombarded by literature from them. Teachers want to freshen their

work in one curriculum area. But if you don't take what the Ministry offers the community
hears and starts asking why, even though we have high academic achievement. (principal)

Continuity of HSP:L or related practices, can also be compromised by a lack of continuity in
school management, lead teachers and lead parents. In two of the case study schools, the principal
was due to leave, which added to a sense of uncertainty and prevented the schools' ability to
commit to anything the following year. Likewise, some teams had not fully explored the question
of whether it was possible - or fair[7] - to depend on the same lead parents for a second year
running. Related issues included the lead parent(s) children were due to start high school; or they
had taken up employment, no longer had the time or enthusiasm, or they wanted other parents to
have a chance at a leadership role.

During the initial series, two lead parents at one case study school had begun strategising for the
following year:

> We're already thinking of two parents who could be lead parents in the future. They are the
> example for their family – if they change their children will change. (lead parents)

Half (51 percent) of the surveyed schools said that there had been no interest or demand from
parents for more HSP programmes (even in different curriculum areas)[8]. A much smaller
percentage of respondents (18 percent) suggested that lack of enthusiasm from parents had
prevented them continuing with HSP-related activities.

Survey suggestions for what might overcome challenges and help sustain HSP in schools,
included greater enthusiasm and attendance from parents; modifications to the resource materials;
more training/professional development for lead team members; better evaluation and feedback to
(lead) parents; and more funding.

Funding

Schools are paid $3,000 to enter into and complete the HSP:L contract. They receive two equal
payments of $1,500 – one before they begin, and one when they complete and provide a written
report to the Ministry of Education. Schools are told that this is expected to meet half of the
expenses and that they should themselves be contributing another $3,000 to the programme.

It is worth noting that at least one of the principals from a case study school mentioned that even
the HSP:L funding available in 2006 was insufficient for the programme itself. One principal was
extremely frustrated to hear that her school would not be eligible for funding for a second year:

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[7] Most schools gave lead parents a nominal fee to thank them for their work, however they were unable to
pay them for the majority of their time.

[8] 41 percent did perceive a demand from parents and 8 percent did not respond to this question. The various
interest areas mentioned included writing, ICT, health, key competencies, Enquiry Learning/Meta
Cognitive Learning Models, homework, getting children ready for school, "children's warrant of
fitness".

> If that's it with the funding then it's a waste of time. It leaves schools after one year high and dry. Schools need more support for HSP:L. We don't just do one year for anything. We need sessions planned out beyond that, otherwise it's not worth it. Setting up HSP:L each time takes hours. If it's valuable the Ministry should reward it. (principal)

Nearly 40 percent of survey schools (39 percent) agreed that lack of funding had prevented them from continuing some form of HSP, with hospitality costs as the most cited reason. When asked what would help them to sustain HSP programmes in the future, those that mentioned funding said it would be used for teacher release time to enable planning and preparation for sessions, or preferably a dedicated Management Unit; direct costs such as hospitality and paying the lead parent; and incidental costs such as petrol for pick ups, supper, prizes, and translating and photo copying resources.

A teacher at a case study school explained that the school needed access to more teacher aides and ESOL professional development to make a real difference and sustain the benefits emerging from the first year of HSP:L. These additional supports all cost money.

School Support Services views on sustainability

We also asked SSS managers and advisors about their role in supporting the HSP:L programme; the training of the lead teams; and their views on sustainability.

Advisors' roles in supporting the HSP:L programme

Advisors felt that they met the requirements of being effective HSP advisors and that their own training and professional development had enabled most of their work to establish effective lead teams in schools. Most of them did have extensive literacy and ESOL backgrounds to base the HSP:L programme on however, and when asked about helping to train other advisors in HSP:L they believed working in partnerships or teams was the most effective way to induct new advisors. As one advisor stated:

> There are strengths in working in cross-curricular teams, including people with knowledge in community development, or working with adolescents. We need new skill sets to bring in or develop. These may exist but are not at the forefront of advisors work. Most valuable of the work we did last year, was building the team and relationships within the SSS team – we learnt a lot about each others' way of working.

Another, believed advisors would cope on their own working with lead teams, but she preferred to be collaborative. She also thought it was very important that HSP became part of every advisor's work:

> Everybody knows of HSP's existence – we all get one days training, but until every advisor thinks about it as part of their work, that's where it needs to go. HSP needs to go alongside all PD.

Nature of the training for school lead teams

The advisors were very positive about the nature of the HSP:L training and professional development and believed it was generally sufficient to facilitate the development of an effective lead teacher/lead parent roles and relationships. This was backed up by lead teams in schools.

Table 27   **Use-value of SSS**

| | **Very useful** | **Useful** | **Not useful** | **Did not use/did not respond** |
	%	**%**	**%**	**%**
HSP:L training (run by SSS or other provider)	61	37	0	2
Support from SSS	39	41	2	18

Survey respondents had found SSS advisors extremely helpful at both stages of initial training and later support, as Table 27 illustrates. Almost all respondents (98 percent) found the training useful, and 80 percent found the support from SSS useful. Case study participants also reported finding the advisory support excellent, particularly for lead parents. Some advisors had attended at least one parent session in the schools they were working with, and some schools had contacted advisors with questions between workshops.

Advisors did make a number of cautionary comments about the training and support. They thought there were three factors required for the training and support to be useful in practice. Firstly, the unique needs of schools needed to be considered. Advisors needed to assist schools adapt the material to meet the school's specific parent group needs. One said, "A lot of schools have said there is not enough substance in the first sessions, but schools have owned what they have created instead of using this material". She meant that when lead teams put together material that they feel will suit their parents better than the standard key messages in the resource folder, they use it better in the sessions.

Secondly, unless the school had the principal's commitment to the programme it was unlikely to be as successful. It was also felt that there would be little impact on teacher's literacy programmes if only lead teachers were involved. They believed whole school involvement was necessary.

Thirdly, some advisors said some teachers were still speaking about parents in deficit ways and they believed the lead teacher had to be well informed to help staff move on from stereotyping parents in this way. Another spoke about some of the messages in the resource: "We need to be careful about the undercurrent to some of the key messages - that there is only one right way, for instance, we can't assume parents are not talking to children".

Priority and level of support in six SSS regions

While all of the SSS managers or representatives[9] spoke very enthusiastically about the aims of the HSP:L programme, they added that it had quite low priority because of the small amount of funding received. One region had allocated 0.2 FTE to the co-ordination of the project, while the other five had a 0.1 FTE co-ordinator in place. One manager said they were planning on shifting the focus of the work from the co-ordinator to all advisors' work, and another said they had a HSP slot at their Literacy and ESOL meetings.

Two regions reported having difficulty recruiting schools, even though one had approached 30 schools. Two regions approached the matter of supporting schools in strategic ways. Both had taken the view that it was more worthwhile supporting schools where it was more likely the programme would be sustained:

> We have chosen to limit the number of schools because it is time consuming and to do it well you need to do it in-depth, by looking at school structures, and understandings of teachers, and school leadership, and what systems and changes they make which enable them to put in place something which is going to last beyond the life of the project … It has to be continually worked on because parents change and teachers change. (Manager 1)

> It has become a part of the discussion with principals, and part of that discussion is around how strong their links with their community are. These questions are built in before the focus of the PD is decided. We ask the hard questions round student data, success or not of previous PD, number of ESOL students identified, links with community, etc. and from there we come up with some recommendations on an evidence basis, about where the PD might start. If they have no HSP we start talking about where they might build that in. (Manager 2)

Barriers at SSS system level

There were specific barriers identified by managers at the system level that hindered the work/development of the HSP: literacy programme in schools in their region. These were mainly about workload and time.

Four managers reported schools reluctance to commit to this contract because of perceived workload issues. One reported:

> We've had a problem this year. We seem to have a lot of those schools involved in in-depth PD and workload is seen as on-top so they withdrew. Mindset needs to change. Schools that were set up for this year withdrew for other reasons and commitments (Manager 3).

Another talked about competing contracts that schools were involved in as the reason there were not many joining the programme:

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[9] Five SSS managers redirected the researcher to interview someone who knew more about this programme than they did.

Another issue seems to be that we had a particular numeracy focus in [one town]. So that took a big chunk out – deliberate decision made not to offer them literacy, as they were involved in numeracy. Another cluster was heavily involved in merging. Another had gifted and talented. There has been too much on. We don't want to overload them. (Manager 4)

Three managers talked about time limitations as a barrier. Literacy advisors had more work with teachers in their region than they could cope with:

There are real issues in our area about the literacy team being able to deliver HSP in this region. There's high demand for in-depth PD in School Support to bring literacy up to scratch. The region has one of the lowest literacy achievement rates nationally. We have twice as many schools as we have staff to serve those schools who want work. Priority is with the teachers rather than the parents. Priority is on student achievement. HSP has taken second place. (Manager 5)

The following two managers spoke about ways of using advisor's time more effectively:

Time. The way the hours are allocated – not a lot you can do in the size of this kind of area on point 1. Transferring the emphasis from the co-ordinator to wider areas – making it mainstream is the challenge. We would like more resources but we've got to work within the funding formula – we have limited resources so how can we maximise it? We have to keep up the momentum, so we need to start making it mandatory. At the moment the advisors' confidence would need to be increased. Some work is needed but we'd use the successes we've had in Numeracy and literacy to show what can be done. (Manager 6)

How we organise ourselves to work together in teams at schools so we don't miss some of these elements. In the past we have taken a rather uncoordinated approach with two or three advisors working at a school - not making much connection at all. Now working a much more co-ordinated approach. Getting better but a way to go. My expectation is like Mäori and Pasifika, HSP is part of all advisors' work - it is every advisor's responsibility to work in this way. Taking a more co-ordinated approach is more likely to achieve it. We are trying to make sure we are taking a lot more comprehensive co-ordinated approach. (Manager 2)

Another manager spoke about the time it takes to get teacher's knowledge raised to the point they were confident to speak to parents:

Time, time, time. While it is important to involve parent learning as part of the in-depth programme to raise student achievement, in truth while any teachers are going through a difficult change process and while they are building their pedagogical practice and trialling changes in their classrooms and having their beliefs challenged, they are not in a position to be able to pass on to parents how to effectively support their children at home. (Manager 3)

Enablers

Managers had a variety of views about enablers that helped sustain the HSP:L work in their regions. One related to the coordinated approach spoken about above:

We are in our second year at looking at a team approach at [city] – working across curriculum as teams, so we are making links across schools. A team approach might be an enabler. (Manager 6)

Another spoke about the co-ordinator's passion to engage and enthuse schools, and one spoke about the highly positive nature of the programme and advisor's effectiveness in getting this message across to schools. Two managers talked about the importance of PD with their own advisory staff, and having them well informed about the Biddulph BES research and the underlying principles of HSP:

> Our own PD as advisors is critical so we have spent some time looking at HSP programme. (Manager 6)

One manager also discussed some of the strategies that worked well when working with schools on the programme:

> Setting up an agreement with the school and indicators of success we are looking for. An agreement with the schools they will commit their own level of resource to this and commitment of staff. An undertaking from school leadership that they will take leadership in this. (Manager 4)

Sustainability: Issues

The HSP:L programme is designed to be a framework for schools to initiate culturally appropriate ways of working in partnership with parents around, in this case, literacy development. It is introduced to schools through specialist training sessions by SSS advisors and supported by these experts throughout the six sessions. The intention is that once the school has worked through one series of sessions successfully, they will use and/or adapt the model/framework in future to further enhance student's learning in other curriculum areas.

Three quarters of the schools who had sustained a home-school partnership programme had invested a good deal of time and effort into establishing and maintaining the relationships with parents, they had kept up the momentum by introducing new curriculum areas including numeracy, and they had used the approach to include their parents in other events and decision making at the school. Many had adapted the folder to make session content more appropriate for their parent communities as well. Of the 25 percent of the surveyed schools who had been unable to sustain any aspects of HSP:L. the main perceived barriers were school constraints (time and funding as discussed above), rather than lack of parental enthusiasm. Four of our case studies were in their first year of working with HSP:L, and so had not had the opportunity to sustain aspects of the programme beyond the initial series, but indicated that they would be attempting to do so.

Given the importance of external professional support in the maintenance of such initiatives (Timperley et al. 2007), the role of the advisors is key. We found SSS advisors to be mostly very enthusiastic about this programme. Many were also ESOL or literacy advisors and saw this programme as a way of promoting educational ideas associated with their area of expertise beyond teachers to parents and whänau. Most realised they had developed another set of

facilitation skills as a result of working with lead parents, and they realised the need to pass these on to advisors working in other curriculum areas. This was mainly done through buddying up or working in a team with other advisors.

All the managers interviewed were positive about the aims of the HSP:L programme, but believed the greatest barrier was the low funding allowance given for it by the Ministry of Education. Some were attempting to spread the FTE allowance received over all advisors' work, so that it became more integral to their regular work.

The findings indicate some areas where there could be improvements to the programme and the ways it is run, which would probably improve the chances for sustaining it. The first involved modifications to the resource folder which was discussed in Chapter 2, the second involved resources to run the programme, and the third involved linking it with all professional development.

Resources schools need to sustain HSP programmes

Overall, there is a strong call from schools for more financial help to sustain the HSP beyond the initial series. Time and funding were the two most scarce resources identified, but in fact these are interlinked. The time barriers included other competing PD initiatives and school commitments, the unsociable/out of school hours required of school staff, and the high workload for organising the programme and getting families on board, which required personal contact and was thus very time consuming.

Links to other PD

Despite the goal of developing home-school partnerships around the common bond of literacy development, the way that the folder is presently structured, the session content it offers, and the funding available for HSP:L could all be read to imply that HSP:L is a once-off programme. Beyond the initial series, schools are primarily left to their own devices, in choosing whether and how to practically continue any aspect of home-school partnerships. As it is not intended to be an isolated *event*, and is instead supposed to be part of a whole *process* towards improving students' learning, building partnerships with parents, and welcoming in particular, non-English language and non-Pakeha culture into the school environment, opportunities for ongoing sustainability would be to link the approach more closely through all advisory work, to other curriculum areas, and to professional development initiatives and contracts such as Te Kauhua, Te Kotahitanga, Student well-being-mental health education, and Fruit in Schools. As it presently exists, the HSP:L is a literacy *programme,* but its strength lies in the framework, model, or 'tool' it provides to form negotiated and joint partnerships between families and schools to enhance and extend student learning.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

As a result of this evaluation we have a number of conclusions and recommendations to make.

The first is our overall impression of the programme as it has been implemented in schools. The survey and case study research findings suggest that the HSP:L programme has been a somewhat successful initiative in the majority of schools. The success factors we have used to evaluate it by have been:

- Participation rates of parents;
- Feedback from parents;
- Perceived literacy impacts on parents and students;
- The establishing of a partnership relationship around learning; and
- Sustainability and continuation of the programme at school level.

From the data it became clear to us that there is no one right way for schools to implement the HSP:L programme, and schools that adapted the materials and programme to suit their parent communities, appeared to be the most satisfied with the results. School's level of receptiveness to its parent communities was an indicator of the strength of the partnerships they were developing with them. Where parents could see teachers making an effort to connect with them, whether it was as simple as serving food and washing dishes after the shared meal, or the principal welcoming all parents together at the beginning of each session, as was reported in case study schools, relationships appeared to improve. International research attests to this. Tett et al. (2001, p. 57) argue that 'parents are always going to be involved with their children's education…it is schools that are not so adept at involving parents and recognising their important educational role'. Crozier and Reay (2005, p. 157) believe that 'schools are not adept at recognising the barriers to involving parents equitably'. It was therefore promising to see many of the schools in our research reaching out to parents in a number of positive ways.

While there was no particular formula for implementing the HSP:L programme, there were some aspects that led to a greater possibility for success. One was running the HSP:L programme as a whole-school/whole-family initiative, which increased participation rates of families and increased the potential for all the teachers to learn from parents. Another was choosing the appropriate lead teachers and lead parents. The case studies confirmed this relationship as critical, as the lead team had to be able to work together in complementary ways and effectively liaise between the school and the parents. The lead teacher needed to initially support the lead parent, then scaffold them to take ever increasing responsibility for the sessions. The lead parent needed to come across to parents with respect for their views and yet have enough mana or respect from them, to fulfil her/his role.

Our interpretation of the data about literacy impacts revealed the programme had been effective for parental involvement in their children's literacy learning, and the potential for this to impact on achievement. We temper this statement though by adding this is more likely to occur over the longer term, rather than the immediate timeframe. There was general agreement about improvements and minor (as opposed to major) positive impacts on student's literacy achievement, interest, enthusiasm and engagement. The data about the impact on teacher's programmes and practices as a result of learning about home-literacies from parents showed less impact, and in fact was not considered by the survey respondents to be as important as parents learning from teachers.

Recommendation: *We would suggest the Ministry look at ways of encouraging teachers to learn from parents about children's home-literacy experiences and practices, and reflect on ways of adapting their literacy programmes to take cognisance of this. This aspect is what makes this home-school partnership programme so different from many others - the key difference being that it is intended to build on the strengths of what the child brings to school in terms of literacy experiences. If this is the part that is missing in practice, it pulls the programme down to other similar 'transmission-type' programmes where schools are telling parents what they think should be happening at home.*

The partnership relationship between parents and the school as a result of the HSP:L programme, is commented on very favourably by survey respondents. Eighty-five percent said they were satisfied with the partnership they had established in their schools with parents. While we agree that many are well on the way, we conclude that they are probably not there yet, as we define this relationship. To begin with we only had one of the partner's viewpoint commenting in the survey (mainly lead teachers and principals) and as we did not survey parents, we reserve judgment. As well as this, when we looked at other aspects of partnership such as jointly defining the problems and sharing the tasks of improving student's literacy learning, and how often the teachers listened to parents and changed their programmes as a result, we could see the partnerships still have some way to go. On the other hand, partnerships do not happen overnight, and the fact that these have begun and are evolving is in itself a very positive outcome of the HSP:L programme.

Recommendation: *We believe it would be worthwhile re- designing the HSP:L framework to include a 'joint endeavour' activity in the first session where parents and teachers work for a shared understanding of what it is each partner is attempting to achieve, and defining their responsibilities about how to achieve their tasks. This would also help to define the content and key messages for the later sessions.*

Sustaining a home-school partnership programme is an important task and responsibility for a school, but also a huge commitment. Many schools have seen the benefits, and are sustaining aspects of the programme. However, there appears to be substantial workload increases with it as well as unsociable hours. These aspects threaten the continued sustainability of the programme over time.

Recommendation: *We recommend that schools should be funded to meet the extra time required to organise and run a home-school partnership programme, through teacher release time and a management unit for the co-ordinator. Home-school partnerships open up entirely new ways of working and thinking about education where the boundaries of home and school are blurring. It may be necessary to rethink teacher's roles and working days and consider alternatives such as flexible hours and job sharing.*

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Appendix A: Senior Management interview questions

Implementation and Mechanics of Process:

Tell us how have you introduced and implemented the HSP programme to meet the unique needs of your school?

How did you go about deciding which literary focus you wanted to concentrate on and which parents to encourage to come along?

What direct strategies did you use to get these parents to come? How successful have they been? Did they keep coming? If not, why not? (How could this have been resolved?)

How did you choose your lead parent and convince them to take on board this role? How did you support them? Were they paid or recompensed for their time in any way?

What were the greatest challenges you faced at this school in building partnerships with parents around their children's learning?

How did you respond to these challenges?

Do you think your school received sufficient support from the SSS in implementing this programme? What else might have been useful?

How did you get on with the SSS advisor? Do you think you had similar goals for the programme? Was there enough flexibility around meeting your school community's unique situation, differences?

How did your teachers feel about the decision to take part in the HSP programme? Why? Were there any who were not keen? How did you respond?

Did your lead teacher take the main responsibility for implementing the programme or did you support her/him? How did you do this?

How were other teachers involved?

Partnership:

How has your school thought about and built "partnerships" with parents?

What kinds of relationships would you see as being ideal?

What do you think the impact on school-parent relationships has been as a result of this HSP programme?

How have your teachers reacted to this?

What feedback have you had from parents?

What has been your experience of the programme?

What are your views about the strengths and weaknesses of the programme?

Do you have any recommended changes?

What are your thoughts and beliefs about the Ministry's policy to develop partnerships between parents and schools to improve student learning?

Do you see any implications for schools and teachers?

Literacy impact:

Do you believe families have very much impact on children's learning of literacy? How? What do you think your teachers here believe about this impact?

What has been the perceived impact of parent involvement in HSP on children's learning and opportunities to learn (at school and home)? By both teachers and parents?

Have there been any changes in how the teachers draw on the home literacies of their students? Have there been any changes on how parents draw on literacy ideas from school?

Have you done any analysis of school wide literacy data as a result of the HSP programme, or do you think it would be unlikely to show any improvements in children's learning at this stage?

Do you have a sense of changes in engagement /attitudes/interest by students in literacy practices?

Do you know about the Team Up material? (Show magazine). Have you utilised this in the programme?

Is your school eligible for the Books in Schools programme? Has this linked well with HSP?

Sustainability:

Did you see this programme as being successful enough to want to continue with in some form in the future and as a beginning to do something important? Or did you see it as a one-off?

What was parents' overall reaction to it?

Will your school sustain any aspect of the HSPL programme beyond the initial series of workshops? (if not, why not?) What aspects of the programme/partnership will be sustained? What will help/enable your school to sustain the programme/partnerships? What are the challenges in sustaining change?

How important was it for your school to have been involved in the in-depth literacy professional development before implementing the HSPL programme?

Can you suggest any modifications to the HSPL programme's resource folder (e.g. that would enable it to better meet teachers' and schools' needs, or enable wider participation of parents in a wider range of their children's learning?)

Can you suggest any other modifications?

Have you any suggestions for improvements/modifications to the implementation of the whole programme, that would enable your school to adopt partnerships with parents in an on-going way, perhaps in other curriculum areas? Which curriculum would you see as being especially suitable to this model?

Have you talked to other principals in your area about this programme?

Has your board of trustees been involved in the HSP programme? How?

Appendix B: Lead teacher interview questions

Implementation and Mechanics of Process

1) Describe for me how you set up the HSP programme in your **school?**

   - organisation / roles (in sessions what was role of the lead teachers?)
   - training
   - strategies to invite parents
   - arrangements for younger chn.
   - food?
   - times of sessions

2) How many **parents** did you expect and have attending?

   - which culture
   - issues for non-attendance
   - relationship with lead parents
   - When parents attended the first session, do you think that they got the information they expected? What did they expect? (Tease out exactly what they thought would be more useful and if it contributed to the attendance/lack of after that)

3) Tell me how you worked with the **lead parents** to prepare them for their role, and how you supported them during the sessions.

   - How well do you think they performed?
   - How did you work translating "teacher material" into lay language which was understandable for the parents?

Partnership established with families/whänau

1) In what ways has the programme impacted on the relationship between the parents involved and the school?

   - how genuine a partnership is it?
   - what kind of opportunities have parents had to contribute/share their ideas about their child's learning of literacy?
   - most successful aspects of this approach?

2) Do you think the school recognises and values parents' involvement in children's learning?

   - was this the case before the HSP programme?

The Literacy impact:

1) <u>How important do you think **parents** are in contributing to their children's literacy learning?</u>

   - In what important ways do they contribute?

   - Practical examples?

   - Has the programme increased parent and student understanding of key literacy messages?

   - Parent's understanding before?

2) <u>How did **teachers** respond to parent's suggestions about ways they help their children learn at home?</u>

   - Did they alter their classroom programme in response?

- How important was it for your school to have been involved in in-depth literacy professional development before implementing the HSPL programme?

3) <u>What were some of the things that worked well from the **resource folder?**</u>

   - specific examples?

   - Any modifications needed?

   - Did you make adaptions?

   - How closely did you follow the HSP folder in terms of the facilitation approach?

4) <u>Have you noticed any changes to your **students'** achievement, or attitude toward literacy since their parents became involved?</u>

   - engagement, achievement, interest, and enthusiasm?

5) <u>Do you know about the **Team Up** material?</u> (Show magazine).

   - Have you utilised this in the programme?

   - Books in Schools programme?

Sustainability

1) <u>Is your **school** sustaining the HSPL programme beyond the initial series of workshops?</u>

   - if not, why not?

   - which aspects will be sustained?

   - Enablers / challengers to sustaining it?

2) <u>How can the programme be adapted to continue to encourage **parents** to attend?</u>

   - what will you do differently to encourage a wider group of parents?

3) <u>What kind of support for the programme did you get from **SSS**?</u>

   - Was this sufficient?

Appendix C: Other teachers interview questions

Implementation and Mechanics of Process

Did you have a role in setting up and running the HSP programme?

How were you involved in the programme?

If you didn't attend the parent sessions how did you receive feedback about what had gone on?

Have there been issues about the setting up and running of the HSP programme in your school for you as teachers?

In what ways are these sessions beneficial for teachers? / parents?

The next set of questions are about establishing Partnerships with families/ whänau

In what way has the HSP programme impacted on the relationship between the parents involved and the school?

What kind of opportunities have parents had to contribute/share their ideas about their child's learning of literacy?

What kind of opportunities have parents had to contribute/share their ideas about the way the programme is organised?

Do you think the school recognises and values parents' involvement in children's learning? Was this the case before the HSP programme?

How genuine a partnership do you think has been created with parents as a result of this programme? How do you feel parents have responded to it?

What in your opinion were the most successful aspects of this approach at working with and involving parents?

Are there things your school could do differently to encourage more parent involvement in the future? What kinds of things?

The Literacy impact of the programme on students forms our next set of questions:

How important do you think parents are in contributing to their children's literacy learning? In what important ways do they contribute?

What do you see as the main gains of the programme for parents?

Has the HSP helped parents to recognise their importance in their child's education? Do you think the programme has increased parent and students understanding of key literacy messages?

Do you think the programme has increased parents understanding of practical ways of helping children to learn? (Specific examples)

Have parents given good suggestions about ways of helping children learn? Can you give me some examples?

How did teachers respond to these suggestions? Did they alter their classroom programme in response?

What were some of the things that worked well from the resource folder? (specific examples)Can you suggest any modifications to the resource folder that would enable it to better meet schools' and parents' needs? How closely did you follow the literacy key messages in the HSP folder, or did you do your own adaptions?

What and why?

Have you noticed any changes to your students' achievement, or attitude toward literacy since their parents became involved? (e.g., engagement, achievement, interest, and enthusiasm)Are there any changes that you are making to your daily literacy learning programme as a result of your experiences with this programme?

What understandings do you think the parents had of the different aspects of literacy before the sessions and has this changed?

Do you know about the Team Up material? (Show magazine). Have you utilised this in the programme?

Does your school have access to the Books in Schools programme? If so has it been used with this programme?

The last set of questions are about Sustainability

Is your school sustaining the HSPL programme beyond the initial series of workshops? (if not, why not?) What aspects will be sustained?

What helps/enables your school to sustain these aspects of the programme/ partnership?

What are the challenges to sustaining it?

How can the programme be adapted to continue to encourage parents to attend?

What are the important issues that schools and parents face if the HSP programme is to be sustained? (what can hinder/ support)

What kind of support for the programme did you get from SSS? Was this sufficient?

How important was it for your school to have been involved in in-depth literacy professional development before implementing the HSPL programme?

Appendix D: Lead parents interview questions

Implementation and Mechanics of Process

How did you get involved in the HSP programme?

Who asked you to become a lead parent and how did you feel about that? How do you feel about it now?

Did you feel adequately prepared for leading the sessions with other parents? Can you suggest improvements to this (if approp.)How did you and the lead teacher work during the sessions?

How were the groups organised in the sessions?

What did you do as the lead parent/s? What did the lead teachers do?

When parents attended the first session, do you think that they got the information they expected? What did they expect? (Tease out exactly what they thought would be more useful and if it contributed to the attendance/lack of after that)

What were some of the things that worked well in the sessions?

Can you suggest any changes to the way the programme was organised which would meet parents needs better? Times/childcare/contacting parents?

How did you work with the different languages of parents? (If approp.)

The next questions are about the Partnerships established with families/whänau

As a result of being part of this programme have you changed how you feel about being a part of the school? How do you think other parents feel now?

What kinds of opportunities did the parents have to share their ideas about their child's learning of literacy?

Do you think the teachers recognise and value parents' involvement in children's learning? Do you think the partnership concept promoted in the HSP programme has been adopted at your school by both teachers and parents?

We are interested in the gains in Literacy that may have been made. These are the next set of questions:

How important do you think parents are in contributing to their children's learning? In what ways do they contribute?

Has the HSP confirmed for parents how important they are in their child's education? Do you think the programme has increased parents' and students' understanding of important ideas about literacy?

Do you think the programme has increased parents understanding of ways of helping children to learn? Can you give me specific examples?

Do you think it has given teachers ideas about students' home literacy practices which could be used to adapt their classroom literacy programmes to better meet the needs of students?

As a result of being part of this programme have you changed how you feel about helping your child with their literacy learning? What in particular?

Have you noticed any changes to your child's attitudes, interests, enthusiasm towards literacy since you became involved? What were some of the things that worked well from the resource folder? (specific examples)

Can you suggest any modifications to the resource folder that would enable it to better meet parents' needs?

The last set of questions are about sustaining partnerships with parents

What can be done in the sessions to continue encouraging parents to attend?

What are the important things that schools and parents need to think about to keep partnerships going? Prompt: what can hinder/ support?

What kind of opportunities have you had to share your ideas about the way the programme is organised?

Do you think your involvement as a lead parent has had any effect on your life / future prospects/ possible career?

Appendix E: Other parents interview questions

Implementation and Mechanics of Process

Please tell me about how you got involved in the HSP programme? How did you find out about it?

Why did you go to your first session?

How easy is it for you to be able to attend the sessions?

Who looks after your younger children when you are at a session?

How convenient is the timing/location etc?

When you attended the first session, did you get the information that you expected? What did you expect? *(Tease out exactly what they thought would be more useful and if it contributed to parental attendance or lack of after that)*

What keeps you coming back? What happens in the sessions? How have sessions changed over time? Who leads the sessions you have attended? *(look at role of diff people and sharing of leadership etc)*What do the lead parents do? What do the lead teachers do?

What do you do? What have you enjoyed the most or got the most out of? Which sessions have stood out as the most useful for you?

Can you tell me about something that you did in a session that you got a lot out of?(*If appropriate*) We understand that you are part of a ____(Samoan) family group – is that right? In what ways do you think the HSP sessions fit with your culture's way of working or learning? (language, process, etc)Have you had a chance to suggest how things could be done differently? Is there anything that could be done differently?

Our next questions are about the idea of schools and families forming partnerships to assist in children's learning:

We're interested in whether you think that some things at this school have started to change or get better because of the HSP programme?

How did you feel about coming into the school before the first HSP session you came to, and how do you feel now? Has anything changed?

What do you think has helped you feel better about coming into the school?

Have you come to think about the school or teachers any differently since you have attended the HSP sessions? What has changed? What was it like before/after?

And what about the teachers …do you feel that the school or teachers have started to relate to your family or your home language any differently since the HSP programme has been running? What has changed? What was it like before/after?

How does your school value families' involvement in children's learning?

How do teachers now use what you told them about the things you do at home that help assist your child's learning in literacy? How has being involved in the HSP sessions made you think about your role in your child's learning or their education?*(If approp.)* What do you see as your role as a parent in keeping your first language alive?.

Would you describe the relationship between the school and its parent communities as a partnership as a result of this programme? Do you feel the teachers are keen to learn from you about your child?

Our next questions are about whether the HSP programme has helped your child's literacy:

Thinking about some of the ideas or activities that that you have talked about in the sessions, are there things that you now do differently with your children? (Prompts: time, way of thinking, specific activities in reading, writing, speaking etc)

Is there anything else that you do differently because of the sessions? (Prompt: behaviour, home routines, library visits, etc.)

 What changes, if any, have you seen in your child or how they feel about learning since you became involved? (e.g, engagement, achievement, interest, and enthusiasm)Are children any different at school?

Are children any different at home?

Do you think that what you have talked about in the sessions has made any difference to how the teachers work with your child?

How important do you think parents are in children's literacy learning? Why do you say that?

What do parents do that assists their children's learning?

If you could choose one message from the HSP sessions to share with another parent who hasn't heard it, what would it be?

Our last set of questions are about the school keeping the partnership ideas going: (Sustainability)

What have you found the hardest about the HSP programme?

What do you think could be done differently, to how the sessions are run, to better suit your family? (programme modifications, leadership, resources, partnership etc)

Have you any ideas about how to let other parents who did not come, know about this?

What do you hope could happen next now that the sessions are over?

Appendix F: Student interview questions

Implementation:

How did *your parents* find out about the HSP sessions? Who goes to the sessions? What have [*your parents*] told you about them?

Have you ever been to a (reading) session? What happened?

The next few questions are about your parents and the teachers working together to help you with your literacy:

(Partnership)

Why do you think your parents go to the sessions?

What do you think about them going to the sessions?

Why?

How much do you think your parents know about what literacy learning goes on at school? What kinds of things do they know about? How do they know about that?

How much do you think your teachers know about your family?

What kinds of things do they know about? How do they know about that?

(Literacy Impact)

Has having your parents come to the HSP sessions helped your learning in any way? Do your parents ever talk to you about the things they have done at the HSP sessions?

What?

Do they do anything differently with you since going to the HSP sessions? Prompt – read more…do they do anything less?

Have you noticed your teachers doing anything differently after your parents have been to a session? What?

Have they mentioned that they talked to your parents?

And what about you – since your parents have been coming to the sessions – has anything changed for you? (Prompt: way you feel about reading and writing; how you work at school; types of reading or writing you do at home?)What do you think about the literacy activities you do at school?

What language do you mostly speak at school? Do you ever speak any other languages? When?

What language do you mostly speak at home? Do you ever speak any other languages?

When?

(If approp.) Do you think it's good that you can speak more than one language? What's good about it?

What's hard about it?

The last few questions are about how parents might keep being involved with school and your learning: (Sustainability)

How do you feel about your parents coming into the school? When else do they come to

the school?

Are there better ways to organise the sessions which would suit your family more? The sessions that your parents went to were all about reading and writing and talking and spelling, but there are lots of other things you do at school too. What other learning areas might you want your parents to get more involved in? (eg science, PE, health, maths etc)

Appendix G: School Support Services Advisor interview questions

Implementation and Mechanics of Process

Do you think the schools you have worked with have adapted the HSP programme to their own unique needs when they have introduced and implemented the programme? What have been some of the things they have done that have led to a successful implementation?

What have been the biggest barriers?

How well do you think the case study school did in implementing the programme compared to other schools?

In the case study school can you describe the relationship you built up with the:

principal of the case study schoollead teacher of the case study schoollead parent/s

Has your role varied in different schools?

How?

Have you been asked to train other advisors? What has been the best way of doing this?

The next set of questions are about Partnership:

In schools you have worked with, how are schools conceptualising and building "partnerships" with parents?

What has been the perceived impact on school-parent relationships? Have you been aware of any cross-over into other areas?

Are you aware of any barriers to this relationship and partnership building? Which schools are having the greatest difficulties? Why?

What are your beliefs about the Ministry's vital outcome to develop partnerships between parents and schools to improve student learning?

Are there implications for the advisory service because of this policy?

The next questions are about the Literacy impact

In schools you have worked with, what has been the perceived impact of parent involvement in HSPL on children's literacy learning and opportunities to learn?

What has been the impact on teachers and how they teach? Has there been any impact on class programmes as a result of teachers learning more about students' home literacy practices?

Have you a sense from teachers at the schools that this work is impacting on student progress and attitudes in literacy?

Did you gain a sense of the role of the lead teacher and lead parent and how they interacted with parents? (ie. was there a hierarchical difference; was a shared style or a transmission model used to talk about the key messages in the sessions?)

How have you found the experience of working on this PD? Does it converge or disrupt some of your ideas about literacy PD? If so what?

The last questions are about Sustainability

What proportion of the schools you work with are sustaining the HSPL programme beyond the initial series of workshops? What aspects of the programme/partnership are they sustaining?

What helps schools to sustain the programme/partnerships? How important is the last evaluation meeting in this?

What characteristics are common to schools that are able to sustain the partnership?

What challenges do schools face in sustaining change?

Are any schools giving staff members management units to do this work?

Do you think some schools are seeing this programme as a one-off, or are they seeing it as a beginning to do something important?

Can you suggest any modifications to the HSPL programme or resource folder (e.g. any changes that would enable it to better meet schools' and parents' needs, or enable wider participation of parents in a wider range of their children's learning?)

What priority and level of support is given to HSPL in this region? (At SSS "system" level)What are the specific barriers or enablers (at the system level) that help or hinder the work/development of the HSPL in schools in this region?

Are you aware of the principals involved in HSP in your area talking to other principals about it?

How well do other advisors in your SS Services know the HSP programme?

Appendix H: School Support Services Manager interview questions

Implementation

Do you know the number of advisors in your region that have been working with schools to implement the HSPL programme?

How well do all advisors in your SS Services know the HSP programme? How many would you say are comfortable and familiar with it? *(Tease out to see if the original Pasifika training has put off some advisors)*

What training is available for advisors in the HSP programme?

Prompt: Do you use a buddy up system to initiate advisors who haven't worked in this area before?

The next questions are about Partnership

How important do you think it is for schools to develop partnerships with parents and schools to improve student learning? Why is that?

What are the implications of this Ministry policy in terms of the work of advisors?

We are interested in the degree of literacy impact on students this programme is having. So our question is:

From the work of your advisors are you aware of any impact of this programme on students' literacy learning?

The last set of questions are about Sustainability of this partnership approach:

What priority and level of support is given to Home-School Partnership: Literacy (HSPL) in this region? (At SSS "system" level)

What are the specific barriers at the system level that hinder the work/development of the HSP: literacy programme in schools in this region?

And the enablers that help?

How difficult is it to keep advisors aware of the HSP programme given the personnel turn-over that occurs in the Advisory service?

Have you any thoughts on the funding implications of the Ministry's vital outcome to strengthen family involvement in the Schooling Strategy?

What thoughts have you about future advisory work in HSPL in your organisation?

Appendix I: Survey to schools

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Home School Partnerships: Literacy Survey

Preamble

The New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER) is undertaking an evaluation about the Home School Partnership: Literacy programme (HSP:L) for the Ministry of Education.

We are inviting all schools that have run the programme between 2001 and 2006 to complete this survey. Ideally, we would like it completed by the Lead Teacher of the HSP programme, but realise they may no longer be at the school. If this is the case, would you and the lead parent complete it.

The aim of the survey is to help NZCER understand how schools have worked with the programme, what some of the results have been, and how the programme could be improved for the future.

Some questions ask you to write your answer and some ask you to choose from a list.

Please mark your choice by ticking the $\bigcirc$, or by circling the number.

Please return this survey by **30 March 2007.**

You can send it to NZCER, PO Box 3237, Wellington in the freepost envelope, or you may fax it to us at (04) 374 7933.

All completed surveys will go into a draw to win two $50 book vouchers.

If you have a query please email senior researcher Dr Keren Brooking: keren.brooking@nzcer.org.nz

*The **Home School Partnership: Literacy** programme will be referred to as **HSP:L** in the survey.*

Home School Partnerships: Literacy Survey

Background Information

1. What year(s) did your school take part in the HSP:L programme? *(please tick all that apply)*

  ○ 2001   ○ 2002   ○ 2003   ○ 2004   ○ 2005   ○ 2006

2. i) Has your school ever <u>not completed</u> the programme once it had begun?

  ○[1] Yes   ○[2] No

  ii) If *yes*, please describe the reasons why you did <u>not</u> complete it.

> If your school ran the programme <u>more than once</u>, please think about the *most recent* year that you completed the HSP:L programme to fill out the rest of this survey.
>
> If your school <u>never</u> completed the HSP:L programme, please return the survey to NZCER now.
> *(Don't complete survey)*

3. Who has completed this survey? *(please tick all that apply)*

  ○[a] Lead Teacher of HSP:L   ○[b] Principal

  ○[c] Lead Parent of HSP:L

  ○[d] Other *(please describe)*

4. If more than one person has filled out this survey, what best describes the way you have completed it?

  ○[1] We completed it together at the same time

  ○[2] It was divided so that each person completed the sections they knew the most about

  ○[3] Other *(please describe)*

5. Why did your school choose to run HSP:L? *(please tick all that apply)*

  ○[a] Our School Support Services (SSS) advisor suggested it

  ○[b] To raise students' literacy abilities

  ○[c] To improve relationships with parents

  ○[d] We were finding it difficult to engage with some parents

  ○[e] Don't know

  ○[f] Other *(please describe)*

6. Has your school had in-depth literacy professional development over the last 5 years?

○ ¹ Yes, after we started HSP:L

○ ² Yes, before we started HSP:L

○ ³ No

○ ⁴ Don't know

Facilitating HSP:L

7. Please circle how many of the following people helped to run the HSP:L programme.

a)	Lead Teachers	1	2	3	4	5	6+
b)	Lead Parents	1	2	3	4	5	6+
c)	Others	1	2	3	4	5	6+

Describe who these others were _____

8. What factor(s) led to choosing the Lead Teachers and Lead Parents? *(please tick all that apply)*

		Lead Teacher(s)	Lead Parent(s)
a)	They volunteered	○	○
b)	Their standing in the community	○	○
c)	Their confidence or positive attitude	○	○
d)	Their availability	○	○
e)	Their ethnicity	○	○
f)	They spoke a language(s) other than English	○	○
g)	Their facilitation skills	○	○
h)	Their education or literacy expertise	○	○
i)	Their parenting style/skills	○	○
j)	Their ease in relating to a wide range of people	○	○
k)	Their good relationships with teachers/the school	○	○
l)	Their good relationships with parents	○	○

m) Other *(please describe)* _____

9. How were the following people in your school, excluding the Lead Teachers, involved in HSP:L?
(please tick all that apply for each group)

		Principal	Other teachers/ teacher aides	Board of Trustees
a)	They were aware that HSP:L was running	○	○	○
b)	They were given regular updates	○	○	○
c)	They helped to plan or organise the programme	○	○	○
d)	They helped to invite parents to attend	○	○	○
e)	They attended and helped at community sessions	○	○	○
f)	They made changes to their literacy programmes on the basis of what parents said	○	○	○

Parent involvement

10. i) Which parents did you invite to the HSP:L sessions? *(please tick all that apply)*

    ○ ^a All parents at the school

    ○ ^b Parents of selected Year groups of children

    ○ ^c Selected ethnicity/cultural groups

    ○ ^d Other selected group – *(please describe)* _____

ii) What Year level(s) were the children of the invited parents? *(please circle all that apply)*

    1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8

11. In the next table please tick all the ethnic groups that attended the HSP:L sessions (column 1) <u>and</u> tick the main languages that were used in the sessions (column 2). <u>If only English was spoken, just tick that box</u>.

Which ethnic groups attended? *(please tick all circles that apply)*	Which languages were used in sessions? *(please tick all boxes that apply)*
○ ^a New Zealand Mäori	☐
○ ^b New Zealand European/Päkehä	☐ (English)
○ ^c Other European	☐ State Which:_____
○ ^d Samoan	☐
○ ^e Cook Island Mäori	☐
○ ^f Tongan	☐
○ ^g Tokelauan	☐
○ ^h Niuean	☐
○ ⁱ Fijian	☐
○ ^j Afghani	☐
○ ^k Somali	☐
○ ^l Indian	☐
○ ^m South East Asian	☐ State Which:_____
○ ⁿ Chinese	☐ State Which:_____
○ ^o Other Asian (Japanese, Korean, etc.)	☐ State Which:_____
○ ^p Other (e.g. South American, African)	☐ State Which:_____

12. Approximately how many parents attended each session (on average)?

    ¹○ 1-5   ²○ 6-10   ³○ 11-20   ⁴○ 21-30   ⁵○ 31-40   ⁶○ 41-50   ⁷○ 51 +

13. Approximately how many parents attended the <u>smallest</u> session?

    ¹○ 1-5   ²○ 6-10   ³○ 11-20   ⁴○ 21-30   ⁵○ 31-40   ⁶○ 41-50   ⁷○ 51 +

14. Approximately how many parents attended the <u>largest</u> session?

[1] O 1-5   [2] O 6-10   [3] O 11-20   [4] O 21-30   [5] O 31-40   [6] O 41-50   [7] O 51 +

15. Thinking across all sessions, approximately what proportion of invited parents attended?

[1] O 1-20%   [2] O 21-40%   [3] O 41-60%   [4] O 61-80%   [5] O 81–100 %

16. i) Were any particular groups of invited parents under-represented at the sessions?

O [1] Yes   O [2] No

ii) If *yes*, please describe the groups of invited parents who predominantly <u>did not</u> attend.

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17. What strategies did you use to encourage parents to attend? *(please tick all that apply)*

O [a] School newsletter	O [b] Ran the same session at different timeslots
O [c] Phone calls to parents from lead parent	O [d] Specific written invitations
O [e] Phone calls to parents from lead teacher	O [f] Word of mouth between parents
O [g] Asked students to encourage their parents to come	O [h] Provided food
O [i] Provided childcare	O [j] Piggy backed session on other parent function
O [k] Other *(please describe)*	

18. How were students involved in HSP:L? *(please tick all that apply)*

O [a] Took school newsletter/invite home	O [b] Took part in parallel student literacy sessions
O [c] Wrote personal invitations	O [d] Performed for the parents (song, dance etc)
O [e] Attended childcare provided	O [f] Participated in the adult sessions
O [g] Other *(please describe)*	

19. When did the HPS:L sessions take place? *(please tick all that apply)*

O [a] During school morning	O [b] During lunchtime	O [c] During school afternoon
O [d] Soon after school finished	O [e] Week day evening	O [f] Weekend

20. On average how long did the HSP:L sessions last?

O [1] Less than one hour	O [2] One or two hours
O [3] Three or four hours	O [4] More than four hours

21. Please indicate how parents were involved in each of the HSP:L sessions, and how this might have changed over time. *(please tick **all that apply** for each session)*

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
a) Parents mainly listened to **lead teacher** without much discussion	O^1	O^1	O^1	O^1	O^1	O^1
b) Parents mainly listened to **lead parent** without much discussion	O^2	O^2	O^2	O^2	O^2	O^2
c) Parents contributed to discussion with **lead parent** only	O^3	O^3	O^3	O^3	O^3	O^3
d) Parents contributed to discussion with **lead teacher** only	O^4	O^4	O^4	O^4	O^4	O^4
e) Parents contributed to discussion with **both** the **lead parent** and **lead teacher**	O^5	O^5	O^5	O^5	O^5	O^5
f) Parents mainly discussed with each other with little direction from lead teacher or lead parent	O^6	O^6	O^6	O^6	O^6	O^6

22. What challenges do you think prevented a higher number of parents from attending?
(please tick all that apply)

- O [a] Timing of the sessions
- O [b] Content of the sessions
- O [c] Facilitation of the sessions
- O [d] Parents were not aware the sessions were on
- O [e] Childcare responsibilities
- O [f] Not enough time/ other commitments
- O [g] Transport difficulties
- O [h] The HSP sessions clashed with other community functions or popular TV viewing times
- O [i] Weather
- O [j] Other *(please describe)*

Partnerships

23. What do you understand by a partnership with parents?

24. To what extent do you think that the relationship improved between the following groups as a result of HSP:L?

	A lot	Quite a bit	A little bit	Not much at all	Don't know
a) Lead Teachers and Lead Parents	1	2	3	4	5
b) Lead Parents and parents that attended	1	2	3	4	5
c) Lead Teachers and parents that attended	1	2	3	4	5
d) Other teachers and parents that attended	1	2	3	4	5
e) School leaders and parents that attended	1	2	3	4	5
f) School staff and parents generally (not just those that attended sessions)	1	2	3	4	5
g) Students and their teachers	1	2	3	4	5

25. i) Did any other relationships improve as a result of the programme (for example between the school and the local church, between ESOL teachers and other teachers, etc)?

O^1 Yes O^2 No

ii) If *yes*, please describe

26. For the following statements, please indicate <u>how often</u> you think that each occurred during HSP:L, and <u>how important</u> you think each is for children's literacy development. *(please circle)*

	How often				How important			
	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever/ Never	Very important	Important	Neutral	Not very important
a) **Lead Teachers** shared ideas about children's literacy learning	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
b) **Lead Parents** shared ideas about children's literacy learning	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
c) **Parents** shared ideas about children's literacy	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
d) Teachers learnt about children's literacy from parents	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
e) Parents learnt about children's literacy from Lead Parents	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
f) Parents learnt about children's literacy from Lead Teachers	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
g) Parents learnt about school culture	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
h) Teachers learnt about community/parents' cultures	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
i) Parents learnt from each other	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
j) The sessions were run in a way that reflected your school culture	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
k) The sessions were run in a way that reflected parents' culture	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

27. What impact has HSP:L had for parents?

	Major positive impact	Minor positive impact	Don't know/ No impact	Negative impact
a) Parents' understanding of key literacy messages	1	2	3	4
b) Parents' increased use of their first language at home	1	2	3	4
c) Parents' use of new literacy ideas at home	1	2	3	4
d) Parents' confidence in talking about literacy at the sessions	1	2	3	4
e) Parents' taking more time to talk with and listen to their children	1	2	3	4
f) Parents' taking more time to read with their children	1	2	3	4

28. Were there any other major positive impacts for parents?

○¹ Yes   ○² No

If *yes*, please describe

29. What impact has HSP:L had for children?

	Major positive impact	Minor positive impact	Don't know/ No impact	Negative impact
a) Children's increased use of their first language at home	1	2	3	4
b) Children's increased use of their first language at school	1	2	3	4
c) Children's increased literacy achievement	1	2	3	4
d) Children's increased engagement in literacy practices	1	2	3	4
e) Children's more positive attitude towards learning	1	2	3	4
f) Children's growing confidence in their self / abilities	1	2	3	4

30. Were there other major positive impacts for children?

○¹ Yes   ○² No

If *yes*, please describe

31. What impact has HSP:L had for teachers?

	Major positive impact	Minor positive impact	Don't know / No impact	Negative impact
a) Teachers' increased use of children's home languages in class	1	2	3	4
b) Teachers' understanding of children's home literacy practices and experiences	1	2	3	4
c) Teachers' understanding of parents' literacy background and contribution	1	2	3	4
d) Teachers' adaption of classroom practices to accommodate children's out-of-school literacy practices and experiences.	1	2	3	4

32. Are you aware of any other positive impacts of the HSP:L for teachers?

○¹ Yes ○² No

If *yes*, please describe?

33. In general how useful did you find the following for running HSP:L

	Very useful	Useful	Not useful	Don't know/ Did not use
a) The HSP:L resource folder	1	2	3	4
b) HSP:L training (run by SSS or other provider)	1	2	3	4
c) Support from SSS	1	2	3	4
d) The key literacy messages and material covered in each session	1	2	3	4
e) The way the sessions were organised	1	2	3	4
f) "Team up" material	1	2	3	4
g) Books in Schools	1	2	3	4

34. Were there any other resources you used in the programme?

○¹ Yes   ○² No

If *yes*, please describe

_____

35. How could content in the sessions or the resource folder be modified/changed to be more useful? e.g. what other material/literacy messages or topics could be added?

_____

Sustainability

36. i) Has your school continued any aspects of Home-School Partnership beyond the HSP: Literacy programme?

$\bigcirc^1$ Yes – *go to ii)* $\qquad$ $\bigcirc^2$ No – *go to Q37*

ii) If *yes*, what aspects of Home-School Partnership has your school done since?
(please tick all that apply)

$\bigcirc^a$ Repeated the HSP:L sessions with more/different parents

$\bigcirc^b$ Developed new sessions in literacy

$\bigcirc^c$ Developed new sessions in curriculum areas other than literacy

$\bigcirc^d$ Run other activities to involve parents in the school

$\bigcirc^e$ Run the **<u>Numeracy</u>** HSP programme

iii) Please describe what you did in more detail.

37. What has prevented your school from continuing Home-School Partnership in any form?
(please tick all that apply)

$\bigcirc^a$ Lack of enthusiasm from teachers

$\bigcirc^b$ Lack of enthusiasm from senior management

$\bigcirc^c$ Lack of enthusiasm from parents

$\bigcirc^d$ No available lead teacher(s)

$\bigcirc^e$ No available lead parent(s)

$\bigcirc^f$ Lack of funding

$\bigcirc^g$ Lack of time

$\bigcirc^h$ Competing initiatives/school commitments

$\bigcirc^i$ Workload organising HSP:L too high

$\bigcirc^j$ Out of school hours too demanding on school staff (if sessions run at night)

$\bigcirc^k$ Other *(please describe)*

38. i) **Has there been interest or demand from parents for more Home-School Partnership programmes (perhaps in different curriculum areas?)**

$\bigcirc^1$ Yes $\bigcirc^2$ No

ii) **If *yes,* please describe** _____

_____

_____

39. What would help you sustain Home-School Partnership programmes in the school in the future?

Overall judgements

40. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each of the following statements about HSP:L at your school. *(please circle **one number** for each statement)*

The HSP:L programme:	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a) Reinforced that parents and families are one of the greatest influences on children's learning and development	1	2	3	4	5
b) Welcomed into the school parent groups who were previously difficult to engage	1	2	3	4	5
c) Endorsed what families are already doing for children's literacy development	1	2	3	4	5
d) Increased families' understanding of literacy and practical ways of helping children learn	1	2	3	4	5
e) Endorsed what teachers are already doing for children's literacy development	1	2	3	4	5
f) Increased teachers' understanding of literacy activities in the home, and ways of helping children learn	1	2	3	4	5
g) Shared ways in which families and teachers can work together to make an even greater impact on children's literacy development	1	2	3	4	5
h) Increased teachers' abilities to incorporate students' out-of-school literacy experiences into classroom programmes and practices	1	2	3	4	5
i) Established a caring working partnership between school staff and the community	1	2	3	4	5

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41. Overall, how would you rate the HSP:L as a way to improve partnerships between your school and its parent communities?

○ [1] Very effective

○ [2] Quite effective

○ [3] Not very effective

○ [4] Not at all effective

Other comments

42. Do you have any other comments about HSP:L in your school?

Thank you for your participation!!

Please return this survey to NZCER in the freepost envelope provided, or fax it to 04 384 7933 by **30 March 2007.**