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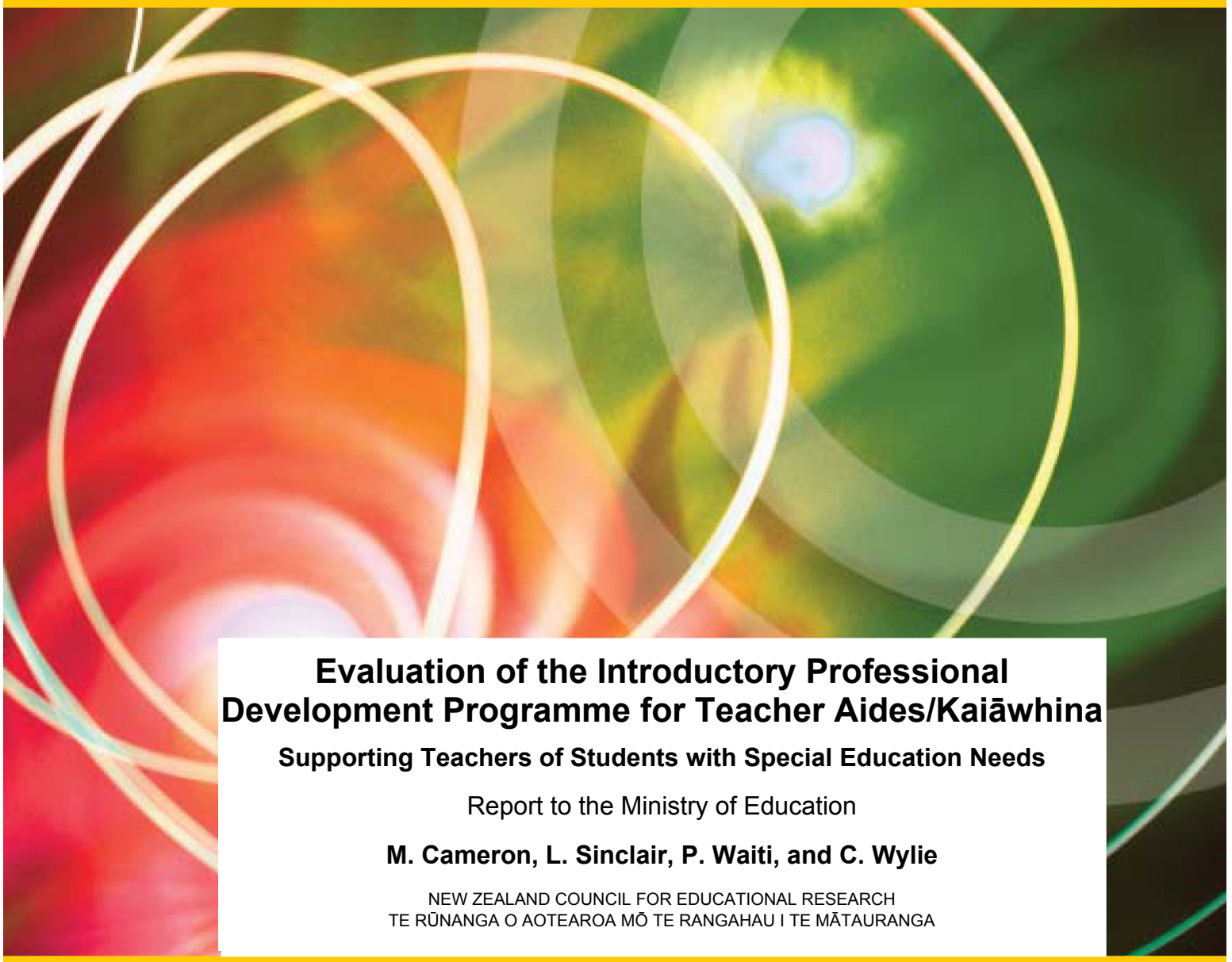

Evaluation of the Introductory Professional Development Programme for Teacher Aides/Kaiāwhina

Supporting Teachers of Students with Special Education Needs

Report to the Ministry of Education

M. Cameron, L. Sinclair, P. Waiti, and C. Wylie

NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
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Marie Cameron, Linda Sinclair, Pauline Waiti, and Cathy Wylie

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WELLINGTON

2004

Acknowledgments

We learnt much from all those involved in this evaluation, and we are grateful to the Ministry of Education for giving us the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the current role and situation of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in New Zealand schools and kura kaupapa Māori, and of the role of professional development in schools' work with their students with special educational needs. We thank all those in schools, the provider teams, and the stakeholders, who shared with us their experiences, observations, and ideas. We worked closely with the provider teams on the design of instruments which would be practical to administer, and of use to them also. We have appreciated the support and interest in the evaluation given by Liz Chinnery, who was in charge of the contract for the programme, and by Melissa Weenink of the Research Division of the Ministry of Education, who also gave us valuable feedback on draft instruments.

We would like to also thank our NZCER colleagues: Edith Hodgen, our statistician and data manager, and her team, and Christine Williams who, with Suzanne Hay, gave us secretarial support.

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Executive summary

Background to this report

This report provides the findings of an evaluation of a nationwide introductory professional development programme centred on the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina working with students with special educational needs, which was funded by the Ministry of Education. The evaluation was undertaken from mid 2001, to the end of 2002. The evaluation in 2001 was formative, designed to contribute to the development of the programme and its companion resources. Our findings were reported to the Ministry of Education to inform decisions on the programme before it began. These findings are summarised in the introduction to this report.

The programme was undertaken with around a third of New Zealand schools, two-thirds of kura kaupapa Māori, and around a third of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina in 2002. It started with whole-school workshops of several hours, using a video developed by a collaboration between the 4 provider institutions as a spur for discussion and identification of school strengths and areas for future development. Around a quarter of the schools requested additional follow-on sessions and support from the providers. Separate workshops for teacher aides/kaiāwhina were held over 2 sessions. The programme ended with a facilitation session, attended by school SENCOs and principals, going through the print and video resources, and suggesting uses and activities to accompany that use. The providers also distributed the resources to all schools, including those that did not take part in the professional development programme, with some using the opportunity to have useful discussions about schools' processes and approaches to meeting the needs of students with special needs.

In 2002, the NZCER evaluation focused on the impact of the programme for people in the schools which participated, using "before and after" surveys of schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina, case studies of 12 English-medium schools, and discussions with staff at 4 kura kaupapa Māori, and with the Māori facilitators who worked on the programme.

The overall focus of the NZCER evaluation was to assess how well this professional development programme met its aims to:

1. increase the knowledge and skills of teacher aides/kaiāwhina so that they can optimise the support and assistance they provide to teachers in their work with students who have special learning needs; and

2. increase school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members responsible for assisting teachers in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of the learning of students with special needs.

Through the evaluation, the Ministry of Education wished to get a clearer picture of:

- how well/effectively the teacher aides/kaiāwhina introductory professional development programme was delivered (including an assessment of barriers and keys to success for delivering and receiving the programme);

- whether the teacher aides/kaiāwhina introductory professional development programme engaged its target audience, and what aspects of the programme and the presentation of the programme schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina found most effective;
- what impact the professional development programme had on school understanding of the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- what impact the professional development and continuing access to Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning (the resource) has on school practices, and the role and practice of teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- any differences in engagement and impact, in relation to the way the programme was used in professional development, its accessibility to schools, any updating of the programme over the period of research, school type, and school organisation, including the extent of inclusion of students with special educational needs; and
- ways to improve this kind of professional development provided in the future.

We summarise the findings related to each research question below.

Was there an increase in the knowledge and skills of teacher aides/kaiāwhina?

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops did result in an increase in their knowledge and skills, particularly in relation to an understanding of their role. Around 40–50 percent of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina who participated in the workshops said they had gained a lot on at least a third of the topics covered in their workshops. The topics with the most participants recording a lot of gain from their workshops were: roles and responsibilities, maintaining confidentiality, individual education plans, strategies to support learning, fostering friendships, effective communication, and behaviour.

Gains were highest in terms of understanding a topic (average of 40 percent for all topics), with similar averages for confidence and strategies learnt (35 and 33 percent respectively). Gains in knowledge and skills were most likely for those who had identified a need for a given topic – but they also occurred for those who had not seen a topic as necessary or relevant to them at the start of the workshop.

Most of the examples of new knowledge which came through the case studies were related to ways of supporting students' positive behaviour and engagement in learning, including stepping-back from doing things for the students in ways which made it harder for the students to learn or experience independence.

Some also gained the knowledge that the Ministry of Education expected teachers rather than teacher aides/kaiāwhina to take responsibility for the programmes of students with special needs, and to work collaboratively with teacher aides/kaiāwhina rather than leaving them to work alone with individual students. Where schools had also used the professional development to improve their systems and practice, this knowledge could be used by the teacher aides/kaiāwhina. But if teachers they worked with did not change their practice, and school systems did not change, the teacher aides/kaiāwhina found it difficult to use the knowledge they had gained.

Was there an increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members?

The school surveys show some increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members, with between 10–17 percent of schools indicating some progress in terms of teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina meeting regularly and working together, and 22 percent indicating improvements in their employment conditions, and appraisal to give them feedback on their work. About a third of the school respondents said their school did not change their practice because staff felt things were already working well.

Some increase in school knowledge and strategies to support teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members was evident in the case study schools that were open to improving their practice, and prepared to put some resources into ensuring that staff could work together.

How well was this professional development delivered?

The case study schools' experience of the professional development was variable, and very dependent on the quality of the facilitator, their knowledge of their subject and of how schools work, and their confidence and willingness to respond usefully to the particular issues raised by school staff in both the whole-school workshops and the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops.

Providers were also aware of the importance of the knowledge and quality of the facilitators delivering the professional development, and because of the difficulties in finding such people nationwide at similar times, were aware of variable quality, even though they provided training and support.

Did this professional development programme engage its target audience?

Thirty-one percent of New Zealand schools took part in the introductory whole-school staff workshops. This was a lower proportion than expected. Likely reasons include: existing school professional development commitments, given that this programme was announced when many schools had already decided on their professional development programme for 2002; some schools were already engaged in professional development about the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina with other providers; some schools thought the professional development would be offered in subsequent years; and the continuing reluctance of schools or school management to give special education priority in their professional development.

Two thousand, five hundred and sixty five teacher aides/kaiāwhina took part in the workshops – probably around a third of all teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

There was a lower than expected take-up rate for the follow-up in-school support which was offered, perhaps because many of the priority areas identified for further work in the initial whole-school workshops were areas which the schools could activate themselves. However, respondents from schools which had taken part in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops and the in-school support sessions were more likely to report that the professional development had had a large, positive impact in their school.

Evidence from the case studies and providers indicates that the whole-school workshops did not always engage all school staff, particularly in secondary schools, where some of those who most needed to be there (principals and teachers working with teacher aides/kaiāwhina) were not present, indicating a school lack of priority to the subject of this professional development. However, those

who did attend found value in the workshops, particularly in bringing people together who did not have time in their daily rounds to share their experiences and ideas for how their work together for students with special needs could be improved.

The providers reported greater interest in the print and video resources where they delivered them personally to schools and kura kaupapa Māori; they noted that the print resource was, however, not reader or copier-friendly. Some schools reported intentions to use these for the induction of new teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Were there any differences in engagement and impact?

There was a higher-take up rate of the introductory staff workshops in secondary, special, small town, low decile, and large schools. This is consistent with the ACNielsen survey data from 2001, which showed that more teacher aides/kaiāwhina were employed in these schools. From the providers' reflections and the case study material, it would seem that schools which did not give priority to meeting the needs of students with special needs were less likely to engage in the professional development, as were schools where material about the professional development did not reach staff who were most keen to have the professional development.

School interest in meeting the needs of students with special needs was also a large factor in the impact of the professional development; the clarity of school organisation and systems (itself a focus of the professional development), was another. There were no school features (e.g. size or type) that were related to the perceived impact of the professional development.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina who were highly experienced were less likely to get as much out of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops as others, but even here there were some descriptions of changes in approach and understanding. It was difficult for teacher aides/kaiāwhina who did gain a deeper understanding of their role in working with teachers, and of teachers having prime responsibility for student programmes, when they returned to schools where they were expected to continue to take that responsibility themselves, with what they could see was insufficient support.

School representatives whose schools had taken part in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops and follow-up work were more likely to report that the professional development had had a large impact on their school practice.

Are there ways to improve this kind of professional development?

Each of the components of this professional development had some value; schools that participated in all of them probably gained most. The whole-school workshops, while not always engaging all who needed to be engaged if schools were to develop or change their practice, did allow the identification of needs, and an affirmation that the teacher aides/kaiāwhina were part of a team, and that a team approach and systems were needed. We cannot tell from this evaluation whether this participation did sow seeds which were later able to be taken up by school staff, particularly SENCOs and principals, and RTLBs.

One theme which was identified in the different parts of this evaluation was that local expertise and knowledge could have been used and built on. The programme has left many teacher aides/kaiāwhina with a desire for more professional development, and this could be offered locally if there was some co-ordination.

Another is that it is important to customise a national programme where possible, so that it engages school staff, and leads them to see how they can make changes in their own particular contexts. There was flexibility in this programme to do so. However, either a longer lead-in time to develop resources, or the use of specialist expertise in the making of videos is necessary in offering a national programme, to avoid the very late notification of this programme, which led to a lower take-up rate than planned or desirable.

The quality of the professional development was generally high, but school staff were disappointed in some facilitators. The providers did experience some issues in recruiting and retaining their teams. The experience of the professional development programme has raised issues about the development and retention of expertise and skills, particularly in relation to work with kura kaupapa Māori. There are some ongoing questions about the sustainability of expertise in special education professional development, if it is dependent on periodic contracts.

This professional development succeeded in showing the roles and responsibilities of teachers, to the extent that school staff queried why they had not also been targeted by the programme.

The weight of schools' existing beliefs about how best to work with students with special needs, and their willingness to give this work priority, was a strong factor in both engagement and impact. This suggests that it is important to include working with students with special needs in all curriculum areas, e.g. literacy, numeracy, science, the arts, so that this knowledge can reach school managers and teachers who would not otherwise take part. It would also make sense to include teacher aides/kaiāwhina in curriculum-related professional development. This would reinforce their role, and give them further knowledge and skills.

Section One

Introduction

NZCER undertook an evaluation of the Introductory Professional Development Programme for Teacher aides/kaiāwhina supporting teachers of students with special education needs, from its development in 2001, to its implementation in 2002. The evaluation was both formative and summative. Our work in 2001 provided material about the initial development processes, identified any issues which could improve the resulting resource, and analysed the draft resources to accompany the professional development programme in terms of the aims of the professional development. Our main findings from this work are summarised after the outline of our summative research in 2002.

In 2002, we undertook national surveys of schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina participating in the programme, and case studies of 12 English-medium schools and 4 kura kaupapa Māori. We also attended the national meetings of the providers to discuss our findings (including an interim report), and to keep abreast of the trends and issues arising from the work. At the end of 2002 we interviewed the providers and a set of stakeholders to get their perceptions of the professional development programme.

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1. increase the knowledge and skills of teacher aides/kaiāwhina so that they can optimise the support and assistance they provide to teachers in their work with students who have special learning needs; and
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- ways to improve this kind of professional development provided in the future.

Methodology for the summative research in 2002

The 4 main considerations in the research design were to:

- provide a description of participants' experiences of the programme, to gain their views of its quality;
- provide "before" and "after" picture of participants' understanding and areas of need in relation to the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the provision of education for children with special needs, and in relation to what the programme covered, and what kind of change one might expect;
- balance the need for a national quantitative picture with the need for more in-depth understanding of the impact of the programme on actual school practices and roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina; and
- use instruments which were practical for the professional development providers to administer, and of some use to them also.

We decided that we would combine surveys of all the schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina who took part in the programme, with case studies of 12 schools, chosen to provide a spectrum of schools in terms of socio-economic decile, location, and size, with 3 in each provider's area, and case studies of 4 kura kaupapa Māori, one in each provider's area. The providers gave valuable insight and information to ensure that the school and teacher aides/kaiāwhina forms that they handed out were user-friendly and practical.

School surveys

To each school introductory workshop the providers took a form which provided a summary snapshot of the participating staff's perceptions of their existing practice (in relation to the aims of the professional development programme), its strengths, and the areas they would like to develop further. Individual staff rated each of these aspects, and one staff member collated these. This form was designed to be used also by the school and provider in relation to identifying needs, or as a snapshot which could be compared internally with later "snapshots".

Between 3 to 7 months after the school had had its workshop, NZCER sent out a questionnaire to the person at each school who was identified as the contact person for the school, and asked them to fill it out on behalf of the school. This was not ideal in terms of a before-after comparison, since we would for some aspects be comparing a summary of individual views, with one person's views. However, it was not practical to return individual questionnaires to all those who had participated in the whole-school workshop.

This material was analysed in relation to school characteristics, the nature of the school's participation in the professional development programme (whether this was limited to the whole-school workshop, or had covered follow-up work with the provider), and provider. The results are reported in the following chapter.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina surveys

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina were given a form by the providers at the start of their first workshop, to identify their level of need for the topics likely to be covered in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops. They used the same form to give their views of their confidence, understanding, and

strategies in these areas at the end of the workshops. We could not tell from these responses whether their practices changed, but they do provide some useful information on their experiences of the workshop, and what they thought they had learnt as a result. We analysed this material in terms of school characteristics, areas of initial need, and provider. The results are reported in the following chapter.

Case-studies of English-medium schools

We chose the sample to be approached from schools that had their introductory workshop in April–May 2002, which were located in areas that were not known to be operating in a fully inclusive way, and which therefore might be expected to change some practices after their professional development. In each school, we interviewed the principal, the special needs co-ordinator (if the school had one), a teacher aide/kaiāwhina, and a teacher who worked with her; and also RTLBs for most of the schools on two occasions: just before their professional development if possible, and again, in October–November, some 5–6 months later.

These case studies provided a fuller picture of existing practices and roles, and how they changed over time (or did not). They also provided additional insight into the aspects of the professional development that made most impact on the participants, and suggestions for improvement. The case studies are provided in Chapter 3.

Case studies of kura kaupapa Māori

For a variety of reasons, which are covered in Chapter 4 and which have important implications for the design of professional development for kura kaupapa Māori, the professional development programme started later in kura kaupapa Māori. This made it difficult to use the same before-after contrast we had used for the English-medium case studies. The main focus of these case studies therefore became the experiences and use of the professional development programme, in the eyes of participants and providers. This material forms Chapter 4 of this report.

Interviews with providers and stakeholders

To gain another perspective on the effectiveness of the professional development programme, and the factors which helped participation and making the most of that participation, we interviewed each of the 4 provider teams, and a range of national stakeholders. The provider perspectives are given in Chapter 5, and the stakeholder perspectives in Chapter 6.

Development of the programme – main findings from formative assessment

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina introductory professional development programme was initially tendered for contract in early 2001. It involved the development and delivery of a professional development resource intended to be used as part of a professional development programme and as a stand-alone resource. The Ministry of Education then decided to ask 4 of those who submitted proposals to collaborate on the design and delivery of the professional development programme. The contractors collaborated on preliminary research to guide the development of the resource and delivery of the professional development programme. This included a literature review of the role of teacher aides,

and their professional development and support needs, a national school survey conducted by ACNielsen, and focus groups in different parts of the country. The first NZCER research documented 5 principles underlying the development of the resources.

- Inclusion. Providers were clear that the aim of the resource was to move school practice further into inclusion by better use of teacher aides/kaiāwhina
- Collaboration/partnership – shared responsibility for students with special needs.
- Teachers have ultimate responsibility for programmes for children with special needs.
- Self-determination of the child.
- Child-centred.

The providers were clear that this professional development programme was introductory only, and would not be able to provide detailed professional development in terms of particular skills or knowledge beyond a basic level. They expected that while they would develop a common framework, there would be local variation in delivery.

Doubts were expressed about how valuable and accessible the resource would be on its own if it was simply sent out to schools or made available on the Web, through Te Kete Ipurangi. It was suggested that RTLBs and SENCOs (special education needs co-ordinators, a role found mainly in larger schools) should be involved.

To ensure a good take-up of the professional development, it was important that the programme and resources be promoted to schools by mid 2001, so that schools could plan, and to overcome some expected resistance to a whole-school approach to their work with students with special needs, particularly where the emphasis was on the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

It was the first opportunity most of the providers had had to collaborate with another institution for some time, given the competitive tendering process which has marked the Ministry of Education approach to provision of professional development in recent years. While it was welcomed, it was clear that it took additional time, and expense, and that there needed to be regular discussions to ensure shared understandings of the tasks and their purposes.

The providers would also have preferred that the original intention to trial the resources was revived.

The NZCER work provided some timely clarification. Regular national meetings of the providers were set up, and the professional development programme included familiarisation sessions for SENCOs. Some providers invited or included RTLBs who had expressed interest in these sessions. However, time worked against a trial of the resources. The programme was not actively promoted until the resources had been developed.

Two of the contracting teams developed a draft print resource, and 2 others worked on a video. These were reviewed by an advisory group, and feedback was also given by all the contractors and NZCER as part of its evaluation. The final resource, consisting of the printed and video material, was ready in early 2003. The resource is entitled *Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning: An Introductory Resource for Teacher Aides/Kaiāwhina Supporting Teachers of Students with Special Education Needs*.

Delivery of the professional development programme

The professional development was designed to begin with a staff workshop delivered at a school staff meeting, where the video was intended to facilitate discussion on the roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiāwhina, the need for a whole-school approach to teaching all students, and the importance of team work. It was intended that all staff including teacher aides/kaiāwhina attend this workshop, although in large schools (rolls of 300+), delivery to part of the school was acceptable providing it included significant attendance from senior management.

After the staff workshop, the programme included two 5-hour interactive workshops for teacher aides/kaiāwhina, and up to 5 hours of in-school follow-up for half of the participating schools. The contractors delivered the staff and teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops throughout 2002. The staff meetings and/or the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops continued in terms 3 and 4, as well as the in-school follow-up component of the professional development programme.

All schools with teacher aides/kaiāwhina without a qualification related to their work with students with special needs in state and state integrated schools, including kura kaupapa Māori, were invited to participate in the programme. The teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops were at first limited to those without a recognised qualification, who worked more than 15 hours a week. The limitation on hours led to a much lower take-up than expected, particularly in rural areas, or where jobs were shared.

The final component, which occurred mostly in term 4 2002, was a familiarisation seminar for one SENCO or senior staff member from each school in the area, including those that had not taken part in the 3 other components, to learn about the resource and how it could be used on an ongoing basis in the future. The seminar included guidelines to assist teachers to work with teacher aides/kaiāwhina. Schools that attended the familiarisation sessions were given their copy of *Kia Tūtangata Ai* at the session. The providers also had the responsibility of distributing a copy of the resource to all schools in their region that did not participate in the contract following the familiarisation seminar. A number of providers delivered the resource personally, to take the opportunity to talk with staff at these schools about the aspects covered in the professional development.

Section Two

National surveys

Introduction

This section provides the collation and analysis of the quantitative data collected as part of NZCER's evaluation of the Introductory Professional Development Programme for teacher aides/kaiāwhina supporting teachers of students with special education needs. The aim of this data collection was to gain a national quantitative picture of the value of the programme for teacher aides and the schools they work in.

Three sets of quantitative data were collected using:

- *NZCER Introductory Staff Workshop Form* (Appendix 1), for all participating schools at their whole-school workshop (Phase 1). In relation to teacher aides working with students with special needs, this gave a summary of schools' perceptions of their existing practice, its strengths, and the areas they would like to develop more.
- a follow-up evaluation form, *NZCER Follow-up Evaluation Form* (Appendix 2), mailed to all schools that had completed a whole-school workshop by 31 July 2002, which asked about changes in practice, views on the use and impact of the professional development, and future priorities for professional development in relation to provision for students with special educational needs.
- a form completed by teacher aides/kaiāwhina, *Teacher aide/kaiāwhina Evaluation* (Appendix 3), identifying their level of need for the topics likely to be covered in the teacher aide workshops (Phase 2), and, after the workshops, their views of the impact of the workshops on their confidence, understanding, and strategies in relation to each topic covered.

We report the findings at the national level, with analysis by school characteristics of type, decile, locality, and size, and the provider areas. Only differences that are statistically significant ($p<.05$) are reported.

Introductory staff workshop

The introductory staff workshop focused on the capacity of schools to work collaboratively to improve systems and processes for students with special education needs. Providers gave each school the *NZCER Introductory Staff Workshop Form* during the staff workshop so that baseline data could be collected.

Characteristics of participating schools

Thirty-one percent of New Zealand schools took part in the introductory staff workshops. Table 1 shows the characteristics of all schools participating in the introductory staff workshops, compared with the national school profile.[1]

A higher proportion of secondary and special schools took part in the introductory staff workshops, compared to the national school profile. Minor urban (small town), decile 1–2 schools, large schools (roll size 300+), and schools with high Māori enrolment (30+ percent) were also more likely to take part. Rural and high decile schools were less likely to participate. This picture reflects the findings of the ACNielsen Teacher Aide Professional Development Survey (2001)[2] that a greater proportion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina are employed in low decile schools, secondary schools, and those with rolls of more than 300 students.

The Auckland, Waikato, and Wellington provider areas had a higher proportion of urban schools and a higher proportion of high Māori enrolment schools than Christchurch. There was a higher proportion of secondary schools participating in the programme in the Wellington provider area, and a higher proportion of intermediate schools in the Waikato provider area. The Wellington and Christchurch provider areas had fewer decile 1–2 schools.

Each provider covered a wider area than their local area. The Auckland provider area comprised Auckland central, Northland, Wairoa, Napier, and Hastings. The Waikato provider area comprised parts of Auckland (Mangere, Otahuhu, Panama Road, Howick/Pakuranga), Turangi, Rotorua, Tauranga, Gisborne, and Waikato. The Wellington provider area comprised Wellington, Wairarapa, Central Hawke's Bay, New Plymouth, South Taranaki, and Wanganui, and the Christchurch provider was responsible for the South Island.

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1 Participating school lists were given by each provider in October 2002. They may not include all schools that took part in the facilitation seminars. National school data was accessed from Ministry of Education, July 2002 database.

2 ACNielson Teacher Aide Professional Development Survey. Report prepared for Wellington College of Education, September 2001, as part of the Introductory Professional Development Programme.

Table 1: Characteristics of schools participating in introductory whole-school workshop

Category	All NZ schools (July 2002)	All schools participating in staff workshop (provider figures)	National return rate for *NZCER Introductory Staff Workshop Form*	Auckland provider area schools participating in staff workshop	Waikato provider area schools participating in staff workshop	Wellington provider area schools participating in staff workshop	Christchurch provider area schools participating in staff workshop
	n=2704	n=830	n=569	n=206	n=234	n=130	n=260
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Institution type							
Contributing	31	30	33	37	32	27	27
Full primary	44	41	39	38	39	44	46
Intermediate	5	6	6	6	8	5	3
Secondary	12	15	14	12	12	22	15
Special	2	3	3	2	3	1	3
Composite	4	4	3	3	4	0	6
Kura kaupapa	2	2	2	2	2	0	0
Māori Authority							
Private	4	3	0	0	3	4	6
State	96	97	100	100	97	96	93
Location							
Main urban	51	50	53	59	49	50	39
Secondary urban	6	6	7	0	7	8	10
Minor urban	11	16	15	12	18	18	18
Rural	31	28	24	29	26	23	33
Decile							
1–2	21	27	25	38	37	19	8
3–4	20	22	22	24	24	23	15
5–6	19	20	20	14	20	21	25
7–8	20	17	17	14	9	23	27
9–10	19	16	16	11	10	13	25
School size							
1–49	18	13	13	15	8	14	15
50–99	15	12	11	10	13	10	13
100–299	34	34	34	28	30	42	39
300–499	18	22	23	29	29	15	12
500–999	12	16	16	15	16	15	17
1000+	3	4	4	3	5	4	4
Percentage Māori							
<8%	25	20	21	18	8	11	44
8–14%	21	18	19	16	8	20	33
15–29%	25	24	27	16	32	33	15
30%+	29	38	33	50	52	36	8

Not all responses add to 100% due to rounding

The providers' Milestone Reports suggest that schools' decisions to take part in the whole-school workshop were influenced by factors such as:

- the comparatively late announcement of the professional development, when many schools had already organised their professional development for 2002 the year before;
- schools felt overloaded with existing professional development commitments;
- secondary schools were under pressure from strike action and the implementation of new qualifications;
- providers' difficulty in making contact with schools where the contact person was involved in full-time classroom teaching;
- alternative professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina provided by others;
- the inability of SENCOs working in large schools to gain the support of senior management; and
- the reluctance of some schools to undertake professional development in the field of special education.

Response rates to the NZCER Survey

Schools that had not returned their whole-school workshop forms were faxed a reminder during the first week of June and further reminders were sent until 30 November. Five hundred and sixty-nine from a possible 830 schools returned forms (Table 2). This was an overall response rate of 68 percent, with some variation among provider areas.

Table 2: National returns from the introductory staff workshops

Provider area	Total number of schools	Returns	Percentage returned %
Auckland	206	156	75
Waikato	234	148	58
Wellington	130	85	52
Christchurch	260	180	69
National total	**830**	**569**	**68**

The characteristics of schools that responded to the *NZCER Introductory Staff Workshop Form* (Table 1) are close to the profile of all the schools that participated in the professional development, giving confidence that the results reported here are robust. There is some under-representation of private and rural schools, and over-representation of schools with a high percentage (30+ percent) of Māori students.

We suggested that a staff member with designated responsibility for students with special needs collate individual staff responses and fax or mail this form back to NZCER following the workshop. Table 3 shows the percentages of principals, deputy/assistant principals, SENCOs, and others, including senior teachers (3 percent), who took responsibility for this task. This area of school provision rests mainly with principals and senior managers. Principals or deputy principals in primary schools were much more likely to complete the evaluation form than their secondary school counterparts (46 percent compared with 1 percent). In secondary schools 57 percent of the forms were completed by SENCOs.

Table 3: Introductory staff workshop returns: staff members completing returns (% of schools)

Provider area	Principals	Deputy/Assistant Principals	SENCOs	Other
	n=222	n=129	n=140	n=67
	%	%	%	%
Auckland	36	27	23	7
Waikato	34	32	25	8
Wellington	35	29	31	13
Christchurch	47	13	22	18
Overall	**38**	**25**	**25**	**11**

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

How forms were collated varied between schools. Some respondents wrote the number of staff members for each possible opinion in the boxes, and some just ticked the most applicable box. Where at least one–third of staff in a school selected a particular response, this was recorded as the "school view". Where more than a third of staff selected "no" as their response, we classified this as "disagree". This gives an approximation of staff understanding of systems involving teacher aides/kaiāwhina in their school, but possibly portrays a more optimistic picture than the reality. Although the majority of staff may have selected "yes", in a given school there could also be reasonable numbers of responses in each of the other categories.

Involvement of teacher aides in schools

Six statements from the printed resource which was part of the professional development programme (*Kia Tūtangata Ai)* which set out good practice for the role of teacher aides working with students with special educational needs were given in the form. People at the workshops were asked to measure their school practice against these statements. Table 4 shows that teachers and managers are further ahead in some aspects of involving teacher aides/kaiāwhina in school work than in others. Most of the school respondents reported their teacher aides/kaiāwhina were included in information systems and IEP and other team meetings and staff meetings, were invited to staff meetings, and the school had integrated systems in place comprising job descriptions, appraisal, and professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina. This may suggest that professional development in these areas was not needed as much as in others. However, the forms do not provide information about the degree of inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina, or the quality of systems. The case study data suggest that there is room for improvement in many schools.

Schools were less likely to provide written plans for teacher aides/kaiāwhina to use in their role, or to provide opportunities for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together. The proportion of agreement with all 6 statements was higher in primary schools than in intermediate or secondary schools.[3] "Don't know" responses were more likely in intermediate and secondary schools, and schools with rolls over 300. This may be explained by the providers' observation that not all staff attended the introductory staff workshop in intermediate and secondary schools, often the larger schools.

[3] Primary = 67 percent, intermediate and secondary = 45 percent.

Table 4: Schools' views of roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina

Statements	Agree	Planned for/ developing	Disagree	Don't know/ unsure
	n=569 %	n=569 %	n=569 %	n=569 %
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is included in systems, which provide information about students and school activities.	89	7	3	13
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is actively involved in IEP meetings and other meetings between team members.	85	8	7	10
There is an integrated system in place comprising job descriptions, appraisal, and professional development for the teacher aide/kaiāwhina.	76	11	4	29
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is invited to attend staff meetings.	72	3	21	17
There is a written plan for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to use for supporting learning and to provide feedback.	66	15	11	23
Opportunities are provided for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.	60	21	22	1

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

There were some differences in reported existing school practices in relation to school characteristics, particularly school type.

Primary and special schools were more likely than secondary and intermediate schools to have written plans, opportunities for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together, and to provide an integrated human resources system. However, and perhaps surprisingly, special schools were no more likely than others to involve teacher aides/kaiāwhina in IEP and other team meetings.

Schools with rolls of more than 300 were less likely to provide written plans, opportunities for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together, or to provide an integrated human resources system. Not all of these larger schools were secondary or intermediate schools.

Although decile 1–2 schools employ more teacher aides, they were least likely to involve teacher aides in IEP and other meetings (50 percent). However, they were more likely than decile 5-10 schools to have opportunities for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.

Rural schools were most likely to provide opportunities for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.

Identified strengths

The strengths identified by school respondents were identified in an open-ended question *"What are we doing well?"*. Sixteen percent of the schools did not record any particular strength. Most schools identified at least one area related to one of the 6 aims of the professional development. Involvement in

IEP meetings was the most frequent answer, and joint work between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina, least frequent.

Table 5: Identified strengths

Strength areas	Nationally n=569 %
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is involved in IEP meetings.	47
There is an integrated system in place comprising job descriptions, appraisal, and professional development for the teacher aide/kaiāwhina.	31
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is included in systems, which provide information about students and school activities.	30
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is invited to attend staff meetings.	30
Opportunities are provided for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.	19
There is a written plan for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina.	18

Thirteen percent emphasised that their school valued their teacher aides/kaiāwhina, and they were fully included in the school life. Ten percent mentioned good communication between staff. Another 10 percent included their teacher aides/kaiāwhina in information about specific students or events only.

Nine percent of the school respondents indicated that, while their school did not have written plans for all aspects, they had written plans for some aspects of teacher and teacher aides/kaiāwhina work together. Five percent mentioned joint evaluation, but not planning, and 4 percent, informal planning and evaluation.

There was some variation for some items among the areas served by the 4 providers. Slightly fewer schools indicated teacher aides/kaiāwhina involvement in IEP meetings in the Wellington provider area (40 percent). In the Auckland provider area, more schools indicated teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina had opportunities to plan and evaluate together (23 percent), or invited them to all staff meetings (39 percent).

There were only a few differences in strengths identified between school characteristics. The larger the school, the more likely it was that teacher aides/kaiāwhina involvement in IEP meetings was identified as a strength.

Identified areas for future development

Table 6 shows the identified areas for future development. Eighteen percent of the schools did not identify an area for future development. Most noticeable is that many schools had picked up the importance of joint planning and evaluation in the work of teachers and teacher aides from this introductory whole-staff workshop. Many of the items in the table are also items which schools could activate themselves, without need for further input from the professional development providers. This may explain the lower than expected rate of take-up for the follow-up sessions.

Table 6: Identified areas for future development

Statements	Nationally n=569 %
Programme time for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together	32
Involve teacher aides/kaiāwhina in planning and evaluation	21
Formalise written plans to include teacher aides/kaiāwhina	16
Improve communication between teacher and teacher aide	13
Formalise processes for teacher and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together	13
Include teacher aides/kaiāwhina in formal professional development	10
Include teacher aides/kaiāwhina in communication/information systems	10
Include teacher aides/kaiāwhina in formal appraisal system	10
Extend open invitation to teacher aide/kaiāwhina to attend all staff meetings	7
Inform teachers about role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina	7
More involvement of teacher aide/kaiāwhina in IEP and other team meetings	7
Formalise job description	5
Develop integrated human resources system	5

There were only a few differences related to school characteristics. Interest in improving communication between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina was highest in secondary schools (20 percent) and special schools (17 percent). Interest in further development in these aspects of special education provision grew with school size – not surprising, given that most of them are about team work and communication, which generally require more organisation in larger schools.

There were some small differences related to provider areas. Nineteen percent of the Auckland provider area schools were interested in formalising processes for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together, 14 percent interested in including teacher aides/kaiāwhina in professional development, and 8 percent in formalising teacher aides/kaiāwhina job descriptions.

Views of the professional development 4–6 months later

In November 2002, we surveyed schools to find out their views of the impact of the professional development. We asked about the following topics:

- phases of the Teacher Aide Professional Development schools had participated in (whole– school workshop, teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshop, in-school support, familiarisation seminar);
- progress schools had made in the area they had identified for future development;
- their perceptions of the professional development programme and the impact it had on the way teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina work together;
- their views of the usefulness of the resource *Kia Tūtangata Ai: Supporting Learning*; and
- future professional development they would like.

The survey is given as Appendix B.

The follow-up evaluation form was mailed on 6 November 2002 to the person who had returned the form after the introductory whole-staff workshop at the 633 schools which had completed the introductory staff workshop by 31 July 2002. Schools that had not returned their forms by 20 November were faxed a reminder. Four hundred and forty-seven schools returned forms by 4

December 2002 (Table 7). This was a response rate of 70 percent. There was a more even response across the 4 provider areas than for the form from the workshop.

Table 7: National returns from the NZCER Follow-up Evaluation Form

Provider area	Total number of schools n=633	Returns n=447	Percentage returned %
Waikato	172	124	72
Wellington	142	100	70
Christchurch	142	100	70
Auckland	177	123	69
Total	633	447	70

In a small proportion of schools a different staff member completed the follow-up form due to staff movement in and out of their previous school. The staff member was asked to reply on behalf of the school. Some differences in answers between the first and follow-up surveys may reflect the fact that the first generally gave a collective view from staff present at the whole–staff workshop, rather than indicating any change in the school. Thirteen percent of the respondents (and 26 percent of the secondary school respondents) stated they had not received the whole–staff workshop, despite NZCER having received their forms. This may reflect changes in respondents at some schools if the designated staff member who collated the whole–staff workshop form had moved to a new position. It also indicates that there might be some instability in responsibility for special education provision, particularly in secondary schools.

Table 8 shows the proportions of principals, deputy/assistant principals, SENCOs, and others, who took responsibility for this task.

Table 8: Follow-up evaluation returns: staff members completing returns

Provider area	Principals n=147 %	Deputy/ Assistant Principals n=112 %	SENCOs n=127 %	Other n=57 %	Missing n=4 %
Auckland	31	29	29	9	0
Waikato	26	32	33	9	0
Wellington	38	17	26	17	1
Christchurch	39	19	24	17	1
Total	**34**	**24**	**28**	**13**	**1**

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

The next table compares the characteristics of the schools participating in the follow-up survey with those participating in the professional development as a whole. The follow-up survey responses are representative of those who took part in the professional development programme, with some under-representation of schools with rolls less than 100.

Table 9: Characteristics of schools participating in the NZCER follow-up evaluation and the professional development programme

Category	All NZ Schools (July 2002)	All schools participating in professional development programme	All schools participating in the follow-up evaluation
	n=2704 %	n=830 %	n=447 %
Institution type			
Contributing	31	30	34
Full primary	44	41	39
Intermediate	5	6	5
Secondary	12	15	15
Special	2	3	3
Locality			
Main urban	51	50	53
Secondary urban	6	6	6
Minor urban	11	16	16
Rural	31	28	24
Decile			
1–2	21	27	26
3–4	20	22	23
5–6	19	20	20
7–8	20	17	16
9–10	19	16	14
School size			
1–49	18	13	10
50–99	15	12	10
100–299	34	34	34
300–499	18	22	24
500–999	12	16	18
1000+	3	4	4

Not all responses add to 100% due to rounding.

Nature of participation in the professional development programme

Schools were able to choose which phases of the Teacher Aide Professional Development programme they participated in. The teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshops were the most popular. Although it was thought that around half the schools would want some follow-up in-school support, in fact only a quarter did so.

Table 10: Participation in each of the 4 phases of the professional development programme

Teacher aide professional development phase	Participants n=447 %
Teacher aide workshop	82
Whole-school workshop	69
Familiarisation with resource seminar	43
In-school support	25

Secondary school respondents and those from rural schools were least likely to say their school had taken part in the whole-school workshop (58 and 55 percent respectively). There was a higher take-up of the whole-school workshop and in-school support in the Auckland and Wellington provider areas, and of the familiarisation seminar in the Auckland and Waikato provider areas among those who responded.

Views of the impact of the professional development programme

The professional development was thought to have had a positive influence on how well teacher aides and teachers worked together. Just under a third of the responses from schools thought it had had a large impact overall.

Table 11: Schools' view of overall impact of the professional development programme

View of overall impact	n=433 %
Small, positive impact	64
Large, positive impact	31
No impact	5
Negative impact	0.5

Missing responses = 14

There were no significant differences related to school characteristics, or to the total number of the 4 programme components that individual schools had taken part in. In terms of overall impact, respondents from schools which had taken part in the in-school support were most positive, with 43 percent of this group saying that the professional development programme's overall impact had been large and positive.

We asked the school respondents to indicate the contribution of each of the 4 components of the programme. These are reported below, for those who said this school had undertaken a given component. Not surprisingly, the longer and more specific sessions made more of an impact than the short whole-school workshop.

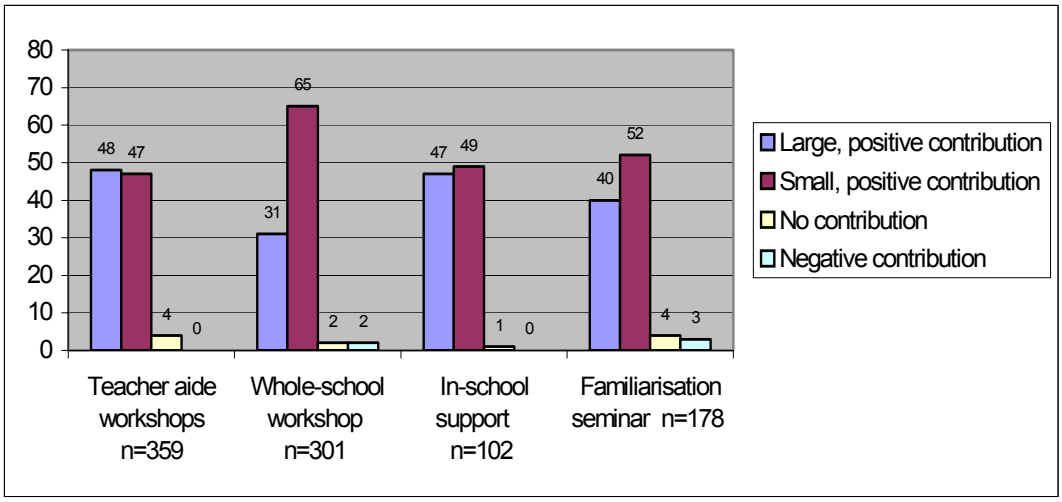

Figure 1: School views of individual components of the professional development

School characteristics, and the total number of programme components that the school had taken part in were not associated with any differences in the respondents' views of each component. There were some variations related to provider. Schools in the Auckland and Waikato provider areas were more likely to note a large, positive contribution from the teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshops (62 and 57 percent respectively), and the familiarisation seminar (46 and 50 percent respectively). Schools in the Auckland and Wellington provider areas were more likely to note a large, positive contribution from the in-school support work (63 and 48 percent respectively). Variations among provider areas indicate that even with a common approach, there are likely to be some differences in delivery and emphasis.

Thirty-seven percent of the school respondents made additional comments here. Fourteen percent noted that the professional development material had been relevant and needed. Thirteen percent had received positive feedback about their current school policies and practices. In contrast, 3 percent thought the material was irrelevant, and 2 percent had had problems with arrangements for the professional development.

Impact on views of the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina

Table 12 compares the data from the follow-up evaluation with the data collected in the first survey to show the impact the professional development programme had made on how teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina work together to support students' learning. Although there was not a noticeable increase in schools' agreement with most of the 6 statements this may be due to the fact that quite a high proportion of schools already expressed agreement with half of these statements prior to the whole–staff workshop. There appears to have been an overall increase in the proportion of schools in which teacher aides are now invited to staff meetings.

The professional development programme does appear to have moved a reasonable proportion of the schools that had not addressed a particular area before to begin to address it, particularly in relation to teacher aides and teachers working together, and in having an integrated human resources system.

Table 12: Schools' views of roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina from the introductory staff workshop and the follow-up evaluation

Statements	Introductory staff workshop	Follow-up evaluation	Introductory staff workshop	Follow-up evaluation	Introductory staff workshop	Follow-up evaluation	Introductory staff workshop	Follow-up evaluation
	Agree	Yes	Planned for/ developing	Planned for/ developing	Disagree	No	Don't know/ unsure	Don't know/ uncertain
	n=569 %	n=447 %	n=569 %	n=447 %	n=569 %	n=447 %	n=569 %	n=447 %
Opportunities are provided for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.	60	**60**	21	**32***	22	**6**	9	**0**
There is an integrated system in place comprising job descriptions, appraisal, and professional development for the teacher aide/kaiāwhina.	76	**76**	11	**23***	4	**1**	29	**0**
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is included in systems, which provide information about students and school activities.	89	**91**	7	**7**	3	**2**	13	**0**
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is actively involved in IEP meetings and other meetings between team members.	85	**87**	8	**10**	7	**2**	10	**1**
There is a written plan for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to use for supporting learning and to provide feedback.	66	**61**	15	**34***	11	**5**	23	**1**
The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is invited to attend staff meetings.	72	**81***	3	**5**	21	**13**	17	**1**
Opportunities are provided for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.	60	**61**	21	**32***	22	**6**	9	**0**

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

* = a substantial change.

There were no marked differences related to school type, decile, or size. Thus the gaps that were evident in existing practice for secondary, intermediate, and special schools, and decile 1–2 schools at

the start of the professional development had closed. Rural schools were still more likely to provide opportunities for teachers and teacher aides to plan and evaluate together (75 percent).

Changes in schools

Thirty-six percent of the schools identified changes they had made as a result of the professional development programme, in response to an open-ended question. These show changes in the main aspects that could be covered in introductory professional development, particularly in human resources, communication, and more involvement in joint work, including planning and evaluation, with teachers. Twelve percent said there had been little or no change.

Table 13: Changes made in schools as a result of the Teacher Aide Professional Development Programme

Changes	All schools participating in the follow-up evaluation n=447 %
Improved/established job description, appraisal procedures, wage reviews	22
Regular scheduled meetings between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina	17
Teachers have a better understanding of the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina and of their own role	15
Written planning/evaluation written with/available to teacher aides/kaiāwhina	13
Increased liaison between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina	10
Teacher aides/kaiāwhina induction booklet/guidelines written	8
On-going professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina	5
Improved collation of data/information about students with special educational needs	4
Development of teacher aide/kaiāwhina network for support and sharing ideas	4
Paid meeting times	1

There were few significant differences in reported changes which were related to school or provider characteristics. Rural schools were more likely to note little or no change (21 percent), and less likely to have made human resource system changes (8 percent). Not surprisingly, given the overlap of school size and rurality, schools with rolls of less than 100 were also more likely to note little or no change (21 percent), and less likely to note improved human resource systems. Schools in the Christchurch provider area were less likely to mention improvements to job descriptions, appraisal procedures, or wage reviews (8 percent); however, they were also more likely than others to say they had made no changes as a result of their professional development because things were already working well at their school (39 percent compared with 28 percent overall).

Fifty-two percent of the respondents said that the professional development programme had changed the way teacher aides/kaiāwhina in their school worked. Changes were unaffected by school characteristics or provider. The next table gives the kinds of change that they identified in answer to an open-ended question.

Table 14: Changes in the way teacher aides/kaiāwhina work in schools following the professional development

Changes	All schools participating in the follow-up evaluation n=447 %
Better understanding of teacher aides/kaiāwhina role and role of teachers	16
More confidence/improved perceptions of self	11
Increased participation in staff activities	8
More active role in the planning and evaluation process	5
Increased knowledge of different teaching styles/strategies for positive outcomes	4
Seeking further professional development	3
Increased ability to communicate with teachers	2

We also asked respondents who said the programme had not led to any change to say why. Their responses to this open-ended question were dominated by the view that things were already working well in their school (28 percent). A further 7 percent said it was too soon after the programme to notice or implement change.

Views of the usefulness of the professional development programme

The next table shows respondent views about the usefulness of the professional development programme for some key aspects of educational provision related to teacher aides' roles. Most thought that the programme had been of some use, or better, for the 14 aspects we asked about, some directly focused on the programme, and some (the adaptation of curriculum and teaching plans), not directly focused on. Around a third thought it had been extremely useful in offering teacher aide professional development. Around 20 percent did not see the programme having useful links with the aspects that we asked about. This could be because of their prior satisfaction with their existing provision.

The aspect that was most likely to be seen as extremely useful was the provision of professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina. Inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in IEP meetings, and in all school activities, human resource aspects of providing job descriptions, and performance appraisal, and the focus on school wide procedures and teacher perceptions of the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina were also more likely to be seen as extremely useful.

The aspects for which the professional development programme was not useful were more likely to be the development of curriculum plans, and inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in staff meetings.

Table 15: Views of the usefulness of aspects of the professional development

Aspect	Extremely useful % (of aspect)	Useful % (of aspect)	Of some use % (of aspect)	Not useful % (of aspect)	Not at all useful % (of aspect)
Special education policy	9	20	49	13	10
School wide procedures	18	36	33	9	4
Inclusion in IEP meetings	20	23	36	8	12
Inclusion in team meetings	14	24	40	10	12
Inclusion in planning and evaluation meetings	14	27	40	11	8
Inclusion in staff meetings	11	18	41	16	15
Provision of job descriptions	19	25	34	10	13
Performance agreements	17	25	34	11	13
Performance appraisal	19	23	34	11	13
Teacher perceptions of role	18	25	31	8	5
Inclusion in all school activities	18	25	34	11	11
Provision of professional development	34	26	29	7	4
Development of curriculum plans	8	15	46	17	14
Adaptation of teaching plans	11	23	42	15	9

There were few differences in assessment of usefulness of the professional development programme related to school characteristics. Special schools found aspects to do with inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in staff meetings, and some aspects of human resource practice less useful, though they valued the other aspects of the professional development programme as highly as did other schools which are not centred around students with special needs. Rural schools were more likely to find the professional development useful or extremely useful with regard to the inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in team meetings (37 percent), and in staff meetings (42 percent).

The case studies show that the individual starting point of school—their existing systems and practices, their attitudes, and willingness to change—made a difference to schools' and teacher aides/kaiāwhina experiences and work with the professional development, and the absence of any relationship with structural characteristics of schools confirms this.

The resources

Eighty-six percent of school respondents said their school had received the video resource and 89 percent had received the printed resource *Kia Tūtangata Ai: Supporting Learning*. (The discrepancy is small but odd, since both resources were packaged together.)

Open-ended questions were asked about ways to improve these 2 resources. Views on the video were divided between those who thought it was good enough as it was (8 percent), and those who would like to see a wider coverage of aspects of special education, and student year levels, especially secondary (11 percent). One percent thought it was too gimmicky.

We asked whether they had used the resources. More than half had done so (though they may have been thinking of the whole professional development programme rather than the video and written resource specifically).

Table 16: Use of Kia Tūtangata Ai Supporting Learning resources

Use	n=447 %
Information on roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiāwhina	76
The video	64
Processes, strategies, and resources for teacher aides/kaiāwhina	59
Roles and responsibilities of special education teams	55
Materials to support whole-school approach	49
Reference materials	44

School size was related to use of the resources for roles and responsibilities of special education teams (this decreased as school size rose, from 62 percent of the schools with rolls under 50, to 42 percent of those with rolls over 1000), and materials to support a whole-school approach (this halved as school size rose, from 74 percent of the schools with rolls under 50, to 36 percent of those with rolls over 1000). Schools in the Wellington provider area were more likely to mention using the materials to support a whole-school approach (63 percent).

Future professional development

Schools identified the type of professional development they would like in the future to support their work with students with special education needs. There is a desire for information and examples to be available to schools through more than one route: for example, through video and ICT, over time and in one-off seminars, and face-to-face with those special education specialists already working with the school: RTLBs.

Table 17: Types of professional development requested by schools in the Follow-up Evaluation

Types	All schools participating in the follow-up evaluation n=447 %
Videos showing "good practice"	60
RTLB works with teacher aides/kaiāwhina	54
Access to information on a website	52
CD ROMs with relevant materials	46
Advice over a period of time on particular school initiatives/emphasis	44
One-off seminar on a particular aspect of special education	42
Local discussion/support groups	42
RTLB works with teacher	39
Videos discussing ideas	33
Access to discussion groups on the Internet	17

There were no significant differences between schools relating to decile or size. Rural schools were less interested in accessing information on a website (3 percent). There were some differences related to school type. Intermediate respondents were less interested in one-off seminars (19 percent). Secondary and special school respondents were more interested in Internet discussion groups (26 and 31 percent respectively). Special schools were also more interested in local discussion or support groups (77 percent), and, because they are not part of RTLB clusters, did not express interest in their potential role in ongoing professional development.

Table 18 shows the aspects of special education schools would most like to cover now in their professional development. The main interest was in finding out more about students' different needs. There was also interest in planning and assessment, and behaviour management. Sixty-three percent of the schools nominated at least one topic.

Table 18: Aspects of special education for future professional development

Aspects	All schools participating in the follow-up evaluation n=447 %
Training in specific learning needs/disabilities	30
Planning, assessment, record keeping	13
Behaviour management	11
Administration/management – job descriptions, appraisal	7
Support to set up teacher aides/kaiāwhina support groups	5
Communication for/with special needs students	4
Advanced courses for teacher aides/kaiāwhina	4
Support funding	2
Induction procedures for teacher aides/kaiāwhina	2
Working with outside agencies	2
Professional development opportunities for parents/caregivers	1
Teacher aides/kaiāwhina in secondary school setting	1

There were no significant differences in preferred topics for further professional development related to school or provider characteristics.

Teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshops

The *Teacher Aide/Kaiāwhina Evaluation Form* was designed by the professional development providers and distributed to teacher aides/kaiāwhina at the teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshops. The form had a dual use. It gave a needs analysis for the providers, which they could use to shape the workshops, though the range of topics and perceptions of needs made it difficult to tailor-make each workshop. It also allowed the collection of baseline data prior to the professional development and again following the professional development to determine the changes for the teacher aides/kaiāwhina who participated in the workshops, as part of this evaluation.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina were asked to identify their needs for topics likely to be covered in the workshops, and then to record the gains in confidence, understandings, and strategies in each of the same topics after the workshop.

Table 19 provides a comparison of the characteristics of the schools of the participating teacher aides/kaiāwhina, for all but the Auckland provider area,[4] with all New Zealand schools, and with all schools participating in the Teacher Aide Professional Development Programme. There was a higher proportion of secondary, special, and decile 1–4 schools and those with a roll size of 500+ students represented in those participating in the workshops in these 3 provider areas. Rural schools and those with rolls under 100 were considerably under-represented. These participation rates are consistent with the findings of the national ACNielsen Survey in 2001 that secondary and special schools, urban, and those with low decile or large roll size, had a higher number of teacher aides on average.

The main variations between the provider areas were related to locality, decile, and school size. There was a higher proportion of secondary schools participating in the Wellington provider area.

[4] The information about the schools teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the Auckland provider (*n*=636) area were employed in had been removed prior to the forms arriving at NZCER.

Table 19: Characteristics of schools employing teacher aides/kaiāwhina participating in the teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshops compared with all schools in New Zealand and all schools participating in the Teacher Aide Professional Development Programme

Category	All NZ Schools (July 2002)	All schools participating in P. D.	Schools of teacher aides/ kaiāwhina participating in the teacher aide/ kaiāwhina workshop	Waikato teacher aides/ kaiāwhina participating in the teacher aide/ kaiāwhina workshops	Wellington teacher aides/ kaiāwhina participating in the teacher aide/ kaiāwhina workshops	Christchurch teacher aides/ kaiāwhina participating in the teacher aide/ kaiāwhina workshops
	n=2704 %	n=830 %	n=2565 %	n=879 %	n=477 %	n=664 %
Institution type						
Primary	75	71	61	64	58	61
Intermediate	5	6	7	7	7	5
Secondary	12	15	23	18	29	23
Special	2	3	5	4	5	5
Locality						
Main urban	51	50	62	63	64	59
Secondary urban	6	6	9	6	12	11
Minor urban	11	16	15	18	17	11
Rural	31	28	14	14	7	19
Decile						
1–2	21	27	27	42	22	13
3–4	20	22	26	28	30	20
5–6	19	20	20	15	22	25
7–8	20	17	15	7	16	23
9–10	19	16	12	8	9	18
School size						
1–49	18	13	6	2	9	8
50–99	15	12	8	9	4	9
100–299	34	34	34	26	35	43
300–499	18	22	22	30	20	13
500–999	12	16	25	26	27	23
1000+	3	4	6	8	5	5

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

Providers gave the teacher aides/kaiāwhina the evaluation forms at the workshops and collected and mailed these to NZCER. Two thousand six hundred and eleven forms from a possible 2656 were returned to NZCER. This was a response rate of 98 percent. Response rates were 100 percent in all provider areas other than the Auckland provider area, where it was 94 percent. The ACNielsen survey found a total of 8155 teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the 2031 schools which responded. Just under half those which did not take part had no teacher aides. Using the ACNielsen figures as a rough estimate of the number for New Zealand overall, it would seem that around a third of teacher aides/kaiāwhina took part in these workshops.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina views of their needs before the workshops

Behaviour, strategies to support learning, special education in general, effective communication, and special education policy were the topics which were most likely to be identified as needed by the teacher aides/kaiāwhina before they started their workshop.[5]

Maintaining confidentiality, the Treaty of Waitangi, working with Pacific students, school charters, and Te Ao Māori were the topics which teacher aides/kaiāwhina saw least need for.

Table 20: Identified needs before the Teacher Aide/Kaiāwhina Workshop

Topics	Need	Would be helpful	Not necessary or relevant
	%	%	%
	%	%	%
Roles and responsibilities	28	54	17
Maintaining confidentiality	15	43	43
Special education	38	55	7
Education agencies and their responsibilities	28	62	10
Treaty of Waitangi	20	49	32
Legislation	25	55	19
School charters	18	54	28
Special education policy	35	57	9
Individual education plans	30	50	20
Recording skills	28	56	16
Strategies to support learning	46	49	4
Fostering friendships	21	61	19
Partnerships with parents, caregivers, families, and whānau	22	58	20
Te Ao Māori	23	50	27
Working with Pacific students	20	48	32
Professionals you may work with	24	64	12
Effective communication	36	53	10
Behaviour	49	46	5

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

There were no differences in need related to school characteristics.

[5] The evaluation form given to teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the Waikato area did not include the 2 topics of school charters and education agencies and their responsibilities.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina views of their gains from the workshops

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina were asked to rate what they had gained from the workshops in terms of confidence, understanding, and strategies.

Data Issues

There were some issues in analysing this data. The form was designed so that the respondents would place a tick in one of 3 columns for each question before the workshop, and either write a number (1, 2, or 3) or place a tick in a sub-column for each question after the workshop. There were ruled columns on some forms, but not on others. The way the respondents actually completed the forms after the workshop varied somewhat. Where the columns were ruled, the completion and consequent data entry were relatively straight-forward, as either the numbers or the intended numbers as indicated by the position of the ticks was captured. Where the columns were not ruled, and the respondents wrote the appropriate numbers, data capture was easy, but where the columns were not ruled, and the respondents ticked a virtual column, data capture was often difficult, but we attempted where possible to interpret the responses correctly. Several respondents had difficulty aligning the (ruled) columns towards the bottom of the table, and appeared to have ticked the column next to the intended column. Where possible, we traced this back to the appearance of 2 ticks in one of the columns, and used this to interpret the ticks below this point correctly.

In spite of the above difficulties, the sample size is large, and the exceptions formed a sufficiently small proportion of the total that the broad picture given by the responses is unlikely to have been seriously affected by the data issues. Some care needs to be taken with the analyses in terms of school characteristics, where the "national" picture can only be based on the data from 3 provider areas.

Gains from the workshops

Although these were introductory workshops, some held over 2 consecutive days, others some time apart, most of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina felt they had made gains in confidence, understanding, and strategies. The proportions for those who said they gained a lot were somewhat higher in relation to understanding (an average of 39.7 percent, compared with 35.2 percent average for confidence, and 32.6 percent for strategies).

The topics with the most participants recording a lot of gain from their workshops were: roles and responsibilities, maintaining confidentiality, individual education plans, strategies to support learning, fostering friendships, effective communication, and behaviour.

The topics with the most participants recording no gain were school charters, the Treaty of Waitangi, working with Pacific students, and Te Ao Māori.

Table 21 Participants' perception of their gains from the Teacher Aides/Kaiāwhina Workshops

Topics	Gains in confidence			Gains in understanding			Gains in strategies		
	None %	Some %	A lot %	None %	Some %	A lot %	None %	Some %	A lot %
Roles and responsibilities	7	49	44	7	42	52	9	57	34
Maintaining confidentiality	16	33	51	13	31	56	15	40	45
Special education	9	58	34	7	54	40	11	59	30
Education agencies and their responsibilities	13	62	25	8	62	29	19	61	20
Treaty of Waitangi	26	56	18	20	58	22	30	53	17
Legislation	19	62	19	15	63	22	24	60	16
School charters	28	56	16	23	58	20	33	53	14
Special education policy	12	58	30	10	57	33	16	59	25
Individual education plans	12	41	47	11	37	53	12	43	45
Recording skills	11	50	39	8	46	46	10	50	40
Strategies to support learning	5	47	49	4	45	51	6	46	49
Fostering friendships	7	46	47	6	43	51	7	47	45
Partnerships with parents, caregivers, families, and whānau	11	49	40	8	47	45	12	50	38
Te Ao Māori	21	56	23	17	56	27	23	54	23
Working with Pacific students	25	55	20	20	57	24	26	55	19
Professionals you may work with	11	55	35	9	54	37	14	54	32
Effective communication	6	47	46	6	44	50	8	49	43
Behaviour	6	44	50	5	38	57	6	42	52

Not all responses add to 100% due to omissions in some returned forms, and because of rounding.

Not surprisingly, those who gained most from the workshops were those who had identified the need for a particular topic. However, those who thought beforehand that topics were not necessary or were irrelevant did in fact recognise some gains. The next table gives the average proportion over the 18 topics asked about, for each category of prior need for that topic[6].

Table 22: Gain from workshops by prior perception of need

A lot of gain in:	Topic unnecessary or irrelevant	Would be helpful to cover topic	Topic needs to be covered
	Average %	Average %	Average %
Confidence	31.8	35.9	41.05
Understanding	34.6	38.2	45.7
Strategies	28.6	30.8	38.2

The main school characteristic associated with differences in perceptions of gain after the workshop was decile, with teacher aides/kaiāwhina from decile 1–2 schools more likely to say they had gained a lot in relation to special education policy, recording strategies, fostering friendships, partnerships with

[6] Some caution is needed here because not every teacher aide/kaiāwhina gave information about every topic, with about 18–20 percent missing in each cross-tabulation of prior need and gain from the professional development workshops.

parents/whānau, te Ao Māori, working with Pacific students, and working with professionals. This may reflect the greater proportion of students with special needs in decile 1–2 schools.

Only one difference was evident in relation to school type, with teacher aides/kaiāwhina from secondary schools and intermediates less likely to note a lot of gain in relation to roles and responsibilities. There were no differences evident in relation to school location or size.

Summary

Here we summarise the evidence from the surveys in relation to the particular research questions for the evaluation which they address.

Was there an increase in the knowledge and skills of teacher aides/kaiāwhina?

This main aim of the evaluation also covers research question 4.

Most of the schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina thought they had gained from their participation. Thirty-one percent of schools described the impact of their involvement as large and positive impact, and 64 percent, as small and positive.

More specifically, 16 percent of the school respondents said that teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the school had a better understanding of their role, and the role of teachers, 11 percent noted increased teacher aides/kaiāwhina confidence, and 8 percent, increased teacher aides/kaiāwhina participation in staff activities.

Seventy-six percent of the school respondents said they had used the information on roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiāwhina provided by the professional development resources (the video, printed resource, and probably some additional material given to schools by providers). Fifty-nine percent had used the resources in relation to processes, strategies, and resources for teacher aides/kaiāwhina, and around half in relation to the roles and responsibilities of special education teams, and to support a whole-school approach. Smaller schools and those in the Wellington provider area were more likely to use the professional development resources to support a whole-school approach.

Around 40–50 percent of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina said they had gained a lot on at least a third of the topics covered in their workshops. The topics with the most participants recording a lot of gain from their workshops were: roles and responsibilities, maintaining confidentiality, individual education plans, strategies to support learning, fostering friendships, effective communication, and behaviour.

The topics with the most participants recording no gain were school charters, the Treaty of Waitangi, working with Pacific students, and Te Ao Māori.

Gains were highest in terms of understanding a topic (average of 40 percent for all topics), with similar averages for confidence and strategies learnt (35 and 33 percent respectively). Gains in knowledge and skills were most likely for those who had identified a need for a given topic – but they also occurred for those who had not seen a topic as necessary or relevant to them at the start of the workshop.

Was there an increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members?

Material summarised here is also relevant to research question 3.

The schools' self-analysis at the start of the whole-school workshop showed quite high agreement among the participating school staff that inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in school systems and IEP meetings was already occurring. The existence of written plans for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to use in their work together (66 percent), and opportunities to plan and evaluate together (60 percent) were somewhat less likely.

The follow-up survey 4–6 months after the whole-school professional development workshops showed an increase in the proportion of schools where teacher aides/kaiāwhina were invited to attend staff meetings (72 percent to 81 percent), and small shifts in the proportion of schools planning for or developing written plans for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to use in their work together, opportunities for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together, and for integrated human resource systems for teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Specific changes reported by the school respondents were:

- 22 percent had improved or established job descriptions, appraisal procedures, or wage reviews;
- 17 percent had begun regular scheduled meetings between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- 15 percent said that teachers in the school had a better understanding of the roles of teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- 13 percent said that written planning or evaluation was now shared or written with teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- 10 percent said there was increased liaison between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- 8 percent said they had written an induction booklet or guidelines for teacher aides/kaiāwhina; and
- 5 percent mentioned ongoing professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

About a third of the school respondents said their school did not change their practice because staff felt things were already working well. This may indicate that schools sometimes used the professional development to affirm their existing practice, by checking it against external measure, and that the introductory professional development attracted confident schools as well as those who thought they needed new knowledge.

Just over half the school respondents in total thought that there had been some change in the way teacher aides/kaiāwhina worked in their school, as a result of the professional development. Key messages about teachers and teacher aides working together, and planning and evaluating, and about including teacher aides/kaiāwhina in school systems, including human resources, appear to have been picked up in a reasonable number of schools. Change had not fully occurred, but was underway. Some gaps associated with school characteristics had closed 4–6 months after the first workshop.

Did this professional development programme engage its target audience?

Thirty-one percent of New Zealand schools took part in the introductory staff workshops. This was a lower proportion than expected. Some likely reasons for this were canvassed in the providers' milestone reports. These included existing school professional development commitments, given that this programme was announced when many schools had already decided on their professional development programme for 2002, and that some were already engaged in professional development

about the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina with other providers, and the reluctance of schools or school management to give special education priority in their professional development.

There was a higher take-up rate of the introductory staff workshops in secondary, special, small town, low decile, and large schools. This is consistent with the ACNielsen survey data from 2001, which showed that more teacher aides/kaiāwhina were employed in these schools.

There was a lower than expected take-up rate for the follow-up in-school support which was offered, perhaps because many of the priority areas identified for further work in the initial whole-school workshops were areas which the schools could activate themselves.

Two thousand, five hundred and sixty five teacher aides/kaiāwhina took part in the workshops – probably around a third of all teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Respondents from schools which had taken part in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops and the in-school support sessions were more likely to report that the professional development had had a large, positive impact in their school.

School characteristics did not play a major part in views of the professional development, or their identification of needs. School and teacher aides/kaiāwhina perceptions of their needs did play a part in what they gain from their participation, raising the question of how to raise interest and motivation, and provide schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina with the tools to reflect on the quality of their work.

More than 40 percent of the school respondents found useful or extremely useful these aspects covered in the professional development:

- Provision of professional development
- School wide procedures
- Provision of job descriptions
- Inclusion in IEP meetings
- Teacher perceptions of role
- Inclusion of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in all school activities
- Inclusion in planning and evaluation meetings
- Performance agreements
- Performance appraisal.

Are there ways to improve this kind of professional development ?

Putting together the patterns of experiences and perceptions given by the surveys, there are indications that ongoing workshops for teacher aides/kaiāwhina would have value, particularly responding to needs which are identified by those for whom the professional development is intended. Preliminary work with SENCOs and RTLBs could help identify such needs. Around half the schools saw that further professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina and for teachers in relation to the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina should come from their RTLB. The school respondents would like ongoing professional development through a range of sources, both through face-to-face, ICT and video, and in ongoing work and one-off seminars.

The workshops and the follow-up support sessions were more valued; however, it was clear that the initial whole-school workshops did allow schools to self-review on the aspects which were focused on in these workshops, which was the spur to further work for some of them. The surveys identify some ongoing use of the video and handbooks.

Section Three

Case studies in mainstream schools

The case studies pick up and explore in greater depth issues influencing the effectiveness of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina professional development contract. The inclusion of the voices of individual teacher aides/kaiāwhina and teachers as well as the external perspectives of the RTLBs also allows us to provide snapshots of how these schools were meeting their responsibilities to provide effective educational programmes for students with special needs, both before and after their participation in the professional development programme. We also include vignettes of 8 teacher aides/kaiāwhina to illustrate common themes in their perceptions of their work in schools.

Method

Our case studies of schools' inclusion and support of teacher aides/kaiāwhina involved interviews with key staff in schools before and after the professional development programme.

Interviews were held in 12 case study schools in Wellington, Palmerston North, Canterbury, Auckland, and Gisborne. Schools were selected on the advice of providers, who were asked to identify schools that were due to have their introductory staff workshops in April or May to allow adequate time for follow-up interviews in October and November. We asked for names of schools in areas that were not known as already operating in a fully inclusive manner, and therefore might be expected to gain/change after their professional development.

We aimed for a range of decile and school type. We rang each of the nominated schools, and invited them to participate. This was followed with a letter explaining the evaluation process, and confirming the dates of the interviews. All schools that were approached were willing to be interviewed. Copies of the interview questions (Appendix D) were sent to the schools before the interviews, to give time for participants to consider them.

The questions guiding the initial interviews aimed at identifying how schools currently worked with their teacher aides/kaiāwhina. This picture was later compared with the material collected in October/November to judge the effect of the initial professional development contract. The first set of interview questions aimed to identify:

- school approaches to meeting the learning needs of students with special needs (policies, attitudes, and approaches);
- employment conditions of teacher aides/kaiāwhina, such as whether they had a job description, and whether they were included in school appraisal systems and staff development;
- roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiāwhina, and their relationships with teachers;
- teacher and school understanding of the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina;
- the degree to which teacher aides/kaiāwhina were included in school information systems such as staff meetings and IEP meetings; and
- expectations of the professional development programme.

Table 23 shows the schools' characteristics. The sample has more high–decile schools than we aimed for, but this resulted from the inclusion of schools in areas that were not characterised as exemplifying strongly supportive practice in relation to students with special learning needs, as well as rural schools. This skewed the sample towards mid and high decile schools.

Table 23: Characteristics of case study schools

School	Type	Location	Decile
A	Contributing primary	Suburban	3
V	Secondary Yrs 7–13	Metropolitan outskirts	8
C	Contributing primary	Suburban	8
Y	Secondary Yrs 7–13	Rural	8
E	Full primary	Rural	10
F	Full primary	Provincial city	7
G	Contributing primary	Rural	3
W	Secondary Yrs 9–13	Provincial city	2
I	Full primary	Rural	6
J	Full primary integrated	Suburban	9
K	Contributing primary	Suburban	2
X	Secondary Yrs 9–13	City	6

Interviews were typically held with the principal, the special needs co-ordinator (if the school had one), a teacher aide/kaiāwhina, and a teacher who worked with her. In most of the 12 schools one or two RTLBs who worked with the school were also interviewed. The majority of the interviews were face-to-face. Each person interviewed was given full information about the purpose of the evaluation and they gave their signed consent to be interviewed.

Secondary schools

Table 24 shows the size and decile rating of each school, the number of teacher aides/kaiāwhina employed, and how they were funded.

Table 24: Characteristics of secondary case study schools

School	Decile	Size	Teacher aides/ kaiāwhina	Student ORRS/ACC funding
V	8	1084	16	6 ACC 1 ACC/ORRS 13 ORRS
W	2	840	9	14 ORRS
X	6	1300	"35–40"	40 ORRS
Y	8	549	4	2 ORRS

Of the 5 teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed, 4 had primary responsibility for, or worked mainly with, one or more students in the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Scheme (ORRS), although other funding sources such as ACC were reported by some primary, and most secondary schools. The

ACNielsen Survey[7] found that at least two-thirds of schools said that they had one or more teacher aides/kaiāwhina funded by ORRS and SEG funding. While schools used a range of funding sources they appeared to associate "special needs" with ORRS funding, thus selecting teacher aides/kaiāwhina who were funded by ORRS.

Secondary school approaches to meeting the learning needs of students with special needs (policies, attitudes, and approaches) before the professional development

Three of the 4 secondary schools were known for their "caring" attitudes towards students with special learning needs. All had positive external ERO evaluations of their support for students with special learning needs. They had a range of approaches to assist students who found academic learning more challenging. Policies on special needs tended to emphasise that students had the right to "instruction commensurate with their ability and skills" and the right to extra instruction rather than focusing on goals or outcomes. None of the policies mentioned fostering the participation of these students in the regular life of the school.

All 4 secondary schools had one or more specialised units for students with special needs. Between them the schools had units for student learning, learning support, work experience, and/or deaf education. Two of the secondary schools were known as "magnet" schools, because of their reputation for catering for students with special needs. Three schools had large numbers of ORRS-funded students (14, 14, and 40 respectively), and one school had "35–40" teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

These secondary schools had developed a range of different ways to manage learners with special learning needs. One school retained old-style work experience classes because staff felt that this setting provided a small and "safe" environment. Students in these classes did not attend "regular" classes unless they were accompanied by a teacher aide, since staff thought they would disrupt a regular class if they went alone. The deputy principal said that students from the work experience unit were more readily employed when they left school than were other students with limited academic success. This was because they learned useful skills as opposed to failing to achieve in a mainstream class.

Another school had a "behaviour" class which was half the size of regular classes, and taught by the SENCO with a teacher aide for a third of the time, and the teacher aide and specially selected subject teachers for the rest of the time. The SENCO believed that these students needed a sound rapport with one strong teacher, which was provided by this arrangement. "It makes a huge difference to their learning." She believed that she and the teacher aide had formed very positive relationships with the students and that this was the best educational option for these students.

In all case study schools ORSS–funded students had several options for where they could be educated. Students with multiple disabilities were likely to spend their time in a specialised unit with specialist teacher support. Other students might spend part of their time in a unit, some time in mainstream classrooms for some of their subjects, or mostly in the mainstream with teacher aide/kaiāwhina

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[7] *The Teacher Aide/Kaiāwhina Professional Development Survey* was undertaken by ACNielsen in September 2001, for the Wellington College of Education, as part of the development of this professional development programme and resources. A literature review on the role of teacher aides in working with students with special needs was also done in 2001 to feed into the development of the programme and resources.

support. In one school the students in the units were taught by teacher aides/kaiāwhina using programmes planned by the SENCO.

Secondary schools' solutions to teaching students who did not fit easily into existing school structures appeared to be to offer them an alternative curriculum from that provided to other students, often in a different place, and taught by teacher aides rather than by teachers. The placement decision appeared to be determined by parents, school staff, and sometimes the student. In some cases parents insisted on mainstream placement when the school considered that the classroom was not the best learning environment for the student.

There was also a range of alternatives for students with moderate needs. Some had no specific provision. Some were placed in lower streams or a special class, offered work experience or more manageable programmes from Year 11, or were withdrawn for additional instruction in reading or mathematics. One school had recently introduced streaming from Year 8. Teacher aides/kaiāwhina worked in the lower bands which sometimes resulted in 3 teacher aides/kaiāwhina assisting 3 individuals in the same class. The SENCO acknowledged that the reason for streaming was to "put more input into the middle and top band". When asked about the effects on the students assigned to the lower band she said:

> I know once you're stuffed in the bottom band you've had it. We've taken one or two out to show that you can move out, but the reality is, once you're there you're there forever. But it's of benefit to the school overall, and it's less frustrating for them (the students) overall.

All of the secondary schools had staff members with responsibility for students with special needs, and in 3 instances these teachers had previously managed special units for students with high or very high needs, where they worked independently from teachers of mainstream classes. The focus of 2 of these SENCOs was very much on supporting the learning of individual students, either in the units or in the mainstream. Where secondary schools had a complex system of options, SENCOs were stretched to provide assistance to classroom teachers who had teacher aides/kaiāwhina in their rooms. One teacher of a "bottom band Year 9 class with low self esteem, behavioural and learning difficulties" said that very little practical support was available to her apart from teacher aides/kaiāwhina for the 2 ORRS-funded students in this class. She said that she had received little advice on the types of programmes required by either student.

In all of the schools, at least one person interviewed did not support special education policy which gives the right for these students to be educated alongside their peers. Reservations about their inclusion were:

- teacher attitudes to these students were frequently unsupportive (although in the two Year 7–13 schools Year 7 and 8 teachers were viewed as being more supportive):

  > I don't think mainstreaming works. I think these students should do their core subjects with a specialist teacher in a home room and mix for the other subjects. (Teacher)

- students with special needs add to the workload of already overburdened teachers:

  > It's nothing to do with not wanting them in the classroom. It's more the work factor. The behaviour management is 75% of your day. You can spend 50% of your time telling some of them to be on task. You are putting extra workload on teachers don't forget. (Teacher)

- teachers who had not worked with teacher aides/kaiāwhina previously tended to be reluctant to share their classrooms with other adults;

> Teachers can feel threatened at the thought of having a teacher aide. They are used to shutting the door and getting on with it. (Principal)
>
> Some just want the kids out of their hair and let them get on with teaching the others. (SENCO)

- lack of physical space in some classrooms for another adult or for specialised equipment such as a wheelchair;
- lack of teacher knowledge in adapting the curriculum to appropriate levels;

> Some rely very heavily on the teacher aide. If the teacher aide isn't there, there isn't much provision. Some adapt the task or reduce demands. Some plan specifically for a range of needs. (SENCO)

- lack of teacher time to adapt the curriculum;
- the inappropriateness of the secondary curriculum for some students;
- belief that these students interfere with other students' learning;
- the complexity of the secondary timetable, which made co-ordination and planning unachievable;
- the large numbers of students that teachers had to encounter each week meant that teachers were not able to know and understand their students individually;
- the demands of assessment in secondary schools, and the problem of reporting meaningfully on achievement of these students;

> They teach to a particular level, and towards tests and exams. They have to teach their subject, and most don't have the time or the skill to teach a kid in Year 9 with a 6 year reading level. They are really obliging and polite, but… (RTLB)

- secondary schools gain public status and recognition for their high sporting and academic achievements, but not for their work with students with special needs.

Roles, relations, and employment conditions of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in secondary schools before the professional development

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina are now used increasingly in secondary schools. All 4 case study schools noted that their numbers had grown dramatically in the last few years. The teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed all worked in mainstream classes with responsibility for ORRS-funded students.

We interviewed 5 teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the 4 secondary schools, because it was realised during an interview in one school that the teacher aide had a qualification that precluded her participation in the professional development contract. We were able to interview an additional teacher aide/kaiāwhina who was registered for the programme.

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed in these 4 schools had been employed in their current positions for between 18 months and 14 years. They worked between 18 and 30 hours a week, with a mean of 25 hours. They worked with an average of 3 students a week, and 4 to 7 teachers each week.

All 4 schools had generic job descriptions for teacher aides/kaiāwhina although 2 did not recall seeing one. None of them had written plans from which to work, and few of the teachers they worked with discussed their long or short-term plans for students with them. This resulted in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina having to think on their feet and work in an ad hoc way with students. The quality of their relationships with teachers, and the ways in which the teachers saw their role varied.

School SENCOs had a broad overview of the work of these teacher aides/kaiāwhina. They received no systematic supervision of their work with students from classroom teachers. One classroom teacher was unaware of who had responsibility for the supervision of the work of the teacher aide/kaiāwhina she worked with: "I assume it is by the Head of the Learning Support, but there has been no communication with me, so I really don't know." Only one of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina reported that she had ever been formally appraised.

One teacher aide/kaiāwhina had previously participated in professional development while employed in another secondary school, and another had been on some relevant courses when she worked at a primary school.

Participation in secondary school information systems

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed appeared generally satisfied with their understanding of school systems, though only one teacher aide/kaiāwhina attended staff meetings. She was paid by the school to take notes for other teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the school, who did not wish to attend staff meetings because of family commitments, and because the meetings were held outside the hours that they were employed. It appeared that the SENCOs also took time to keep teacher aides/kaiāwhina informed as well as they could.

Teacher and school understanding of the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in secondary schools

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina experiences of their work varied according to their backgrounds, previous experiences, the students and teachers they worked with, their professional development, and factors related to the particular school they worked in.

To show these experiences in context, and to illustrate the kinds of changes which their experience of the professional development brought about (or did not), we provide vignettes of each teacher aide/kaiāwhina which illustrate how the 4 secondary schools and their teachers understood the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina before and after the professional development, how teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina worked together, and how this was experienced by the teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Angela

Before the professional development

Angela is employed for 25 hours a week. She works with Michael, a Year 11 student with spina bifida for 15 hours a week, another student for 5 hours, and is employed as a teacher assistant for 5 hours a week. She has "been with" Michael for four-and-a-half years as she was previously employed at his intermediate school. She was taught to use "pause, prompt, and praise" strategies to assist with reading while working at the intermediate school.

She is employed to assist with his personal care needs, physiotherapy, and to help him with his learning needs. She also is responsible for much of the liaison with his parents, teachers, the hospital, and physiotherapist.

Apart from some guidance from a physiotherapist she has had little training to help her with her work. Michael's mother taught her how to catheterise him, which she does twice a day. Michael has always been fully educated alongside his peers and Angela has seen significant growth in his social development.

> The mainstream hasn't isolated him. He has always had friends. I help him to interact and be part of the classroom. It's been great seeing him grow as a person. He's now more self confident. He's a very social person. He loves to talk and he's got something to talk about.

While Angela believes that Michael is appropriately placed in a mainstream classroom she does not think that all students benefit from full-time placement. "Some kids are better with a mix, and some kids can't cope with mainstream. It's beyond them."

She considers that she has been very lucky with the teachers she has worked with because they have appreciated her role. In her experience some teachers are "able to give him his own work", but in most instances she has taken responsibility for assisting Michael to learn. She helps him to read the work in class, and supervises his written work. She has had little guidance.

"You just use your basic common knowledge. If you get a chance at morning tea you might discuss what is coming up." The help is there from the SENCO should she ask, but "she basically leaves it up to me. I come to her as a last resort."

There is no system of appraisal or professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the school. She had not been aware that she was to attend the teacher aides/kaiāwhina professional development, but thought that it would be good to "have a lot more knowledge and learn new skills".

In a typical day she will go with Michael to form period, and then go to his first class. She does not necessarily position herself alongside Michael, and will assist other students who need help. At recess time after she has attended to his toileting he spends the time with his classmates, while she has morning tea. She does not attend all of his classes; for example, she is not needed in design class because there is little reading involved.

Angela says that Michael's reading age is around 9 to 10 which is why he cannot cope with the reading demands of the classroom. "He does exactly the same work as the rest of the children. His parents want Michael to get the social experience. We do what we can to the best of his ability. As long as he tries and makes an effort."

In her work with Michael, Angela appears to operate as intermediary between the teacher and Michael. There is no adaptation of the curriculum to give him opportunities to engage with a measure of independence. There appear to be no specific goals to direct his learning. Expectations for Michael appear to be those of social engagement rather than enhancing his independent participation in the classroom.

Angela is aware of the need to look ahead to her employment options. She is considering enrolling in a teacher education programme because there is no career structure for teacher aides/kaiāwhina. The salary is also an issue and she has been "making other niches for myself in the school". At times she has been employed to supervise classes as a reliever and she has been paid $23 an hour, which appears to her as significantly more money for less responsibility.

The professional development

Angela was disappointed in her experience of the professional development. Unfortunately the person whom the providers for her area had employed to deliver the professional development lacked the knowledge and skills to deliver effectively. Angela said that: "I knew more than the presenter. She didn't present it very well. She was not sure of the stuff that she was supposed to be teaching". She felt "let down" and disappointed. Because Angela brought considerable experience to her role she felt that she already knew much of the content of the professional development. "It was a waste of time. I have been a teacher aide for so long. It would have been fine for a new person". She reported that a lot of the course members did not go back to the second day of this professional development workshop. In her view, the best part of the workshop was the opportunity to meet other teacher aides to share ideas. She would have liked the professional development to focus on "behaviour and how to modify the curriculum so that kids can learn".

When asked about the whole-school staff meeting she said that she did not know that there had been a staff meeting. (The teacher said that staff had been very confused about the purpose of the staff meeting.)

The impact of the professional development

Angela did not think that the professional development had any effect on her employment conditions or work with teachers. She had not seen the Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning resources. Teachers and the SENCO shared her disappointment with the presenter and concurred with her view that there had been no discernable impact on school practices.

Because she is the only teacher aide to work alongside students in the mainstream who do not spend much of their time in a special unit she feels unsupported. "Everyone assumes I'm coping. I am, but there's no back up for me."

She no longer works with Michael because of "a mistake with teacher aide hours" and reports that Michael "has done wonderfully this year. I felt that he was getting a bit lazy and expecting me to do his work for him. He has got his bronze medal for Young Achievers. He is still working below the other students but he is doing OK for him." His classroom teacher felt that it had been better for him to be without a teacher aide as he had been forced to fall back on his own resources. "I think it's better for him to be without a teacher aide. I've taken more of a supervisory role. Without a teacher aide, he's gotten away with more, but he is managing".

Angela is now investigating school support for further teacher aide training with the guidance of another staff member. She believes that teacher aides could be included in some whole-school professional development opportunities. "I had to learn with Michael how to do PowerPoint. Couldn't we be included with the teachers when they learn?" The teacher we interviewed believed that teacher aides would benefit from ICT skills, but teacher aides were not invited to participate in a current contract. Despite her having asked for information about teacher aide training in the past from the SENCO she has had no response. Given that the SENCO reported that "Quite frankly I don't like qualified teacher aides because they come in and tell you what to do," this is not surprising.

Angela believes that the school would cater better for students with special learning needs if teacher aides were "used as an addition to the teachers. Have them (the students) going to different subjects instead of teaching them in here (special unit). Take them out."

Susan and Diana

Two teacher aides/kaiāwhina were interviewed in this secondary school, as it was apparent during the interview with Susan that she was ineligible for the professional development.

Susan

Susan is a very experienced teacher aide/kaiāwhina. She has been 8 years in this school and previously 8 years with a primary school. She began working in the secondary system as she accompanied a student with whom she had worked throughout her primary schooling. This young woman is now a mother with a young child, and Susan is still very much part of her life. Susan is employed for 28 hours a week. She is also paid to attend staff meetings to take notes for the rest of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina. She considers that very supportive school management is the key to this school being able to cater effectively for the wide range of students who enrol. The learning support team meets regularly to plan and monitor student progress. She collects data on student progress for IEP meetings. However, she believes that she would be more effective if she had some time scheduled for planning and preparation, and "for meetings that aren't rushed".

She is regularly appraised and teachers compliment her on her work. She has completed some teacher aide tertiary papers, partly funded by the school. She considers that she is a valued staff member and that she is respected and trusted. She is asked to go on field trips outside the school. She is able to interact professionally with the RTLB and outside agencies.

She works with 6 teachers. Half of her time is spent with a class of 15 Year 9 students with behaviour and learning problems who have been grouped together as "the behaviour class". She is timetabled with this class for their integrated English and social studies classes, maths, physical education, and cooking classes. She considers that she functions and is treated as an extra teacher during these classes. She checks the students' homework and manages the reinforcement system which rewards them for completion of work. She and the class teacher each spend about $70 of their own money a term to purchase rewards such as movie tickets for the students. She believes that students achieve well in this class because "the programme is slowed right down, we can target individual problems and some kids need the TLC".

When asked to describe how she typically works she talked about a maths lesson:

> "The teacher teaches to the class. I'm following that too. Then they have an exercise to do. '
>
> If you have half a brain you can follow the lesson. If I don't understand I say `Could you go over that again' because if I don't understand it, then others will have trouble too."

She felt that it was very helpful to the teachers to have feedback on the clarity of their teaching from her. After the students are set to work on exercises she circulates around the room assisting any who need her.

The rest of her time is spent acting as writer for a Year 11 student and a Year 9 student who both have physical disabilities. If either of these students is absent from class she attends and writes the work in their books so that they have a record of the work that has been taught to the rest of the class.

Susan believes that care needs to be given to optimising the best educational environments for students. She does not think that all students benefit from attending all classes at the secondary level.

There are some students who are never going to achieve, for example going to graphics when they can't hold a pen. Some kids have other skills to learn. Including all kids in school isn't fair. There's got to be a line, but I'm not sure what it is. Sitting in a room, not understanding a thing, all you are training them to do is to sit down and shut up. They could be learning more useful things.

She thinks that the professional development opportunity is evidence that teacher aiding is being taken seriously as a growing profession.

Susan was not interviewed after the professional development as she was not eligible to participate.

Diana

Diana agreed to be interviewed at short notice. She has been at this school for 18 months, is employed for 30 hours a week, and "came with" a student from primary school with whom she has worked for 7 years. She also assists 3 other ORRS-funded students, both in the special unit and in mainstream classes. She has had no professional development to date, and thinks that the professional development will be useful because

> Anything helps as far as I am concerned. There's always something to learn.
>
> She thinks her main role is to quickly think on my feet and break the work down to the student's level. [I am] constantly talking to them, trying to get them to understand, trying to get them to attempt new experiences.

When asked to describe how this worked in practice she said:

> I sit beside them. I listen to the instructions and modify whatever is required. We may do something a little different. Usually you find out when you get there. For one teacher I have a long term plan, and the teacher gives me ideas.
>
> The specialist facility prepares the students' IEPs and she works from those. She would like to see more contact between the specialist units and the classroom teachers. As it is she is the intermediary between the two contexts. She feels able to discuss any problems with teachers but finding time is difficult.

The professional development

In Diana's school, the professional development began with a small staff meeting attended by key staff including teacher aides. As a result of this meeting, it was decided to design a whole–staff meeting. She enjoyed the teacher aide workshop, especially "just listening to other people's ideas, thinking 'I could try that.'"

After the professional development

As a result of the professional development Diana tried to remember to stand back a bit more "forcing them to ask the teacher or another student. I think that I did a lot for them before than I probably should have." She felt that students had become more self reliant and were achieving more work independently.Although she has not seen the resource yet, she found the 2 workbooks provided at the course were "good. Something to go back to and have another look. The reflection strategy was most useful."

She did not think that teachers did anything differently. "We're just given what they plan for the class and we try to adapt it." She believed that teacher aides tended to relieve teachers of planning responsibility for students.

> They don't approach these students or help them to do research like they would for any other student. Teachers need to understand that these students are part of the classroom and they are their responsibility. [My] sitting back has helped them to take more responsibility.

She feels very well supported by her school. "Here you've got the support if things go wrong."

Diana would like regular opportunities to meet with other teacher aides.

Nicky

Nicky is also a very experienced teacher aide/kaiāwhina. She has been employed as a teacher aide/kaiāwhina for 14 years, has a teacher aide certificate, and some training from the then SES. She has learned the Makaton signing system. She is employed for 18 hours a week and works with 7 students and 6 teachers. She described her role as "adapting the curriculum programme. Teachers tend to leave it up to me. I sit beside a kid and listen to what has to be done and I might say,

> OK, you don't have to do the whole thing. With some I have to write out every word for them. I am trying to teach the child at its level, while the teacher is moving the rest on, and I am trying to help them to keep up.

She also considers that she is of assistance to all students who need help in the room as well as giving feedback to the teacher. "The other day I had to advise the science teacher that the child was not capable of copying the stuff off the board."

She contrasted her work at the secondary level with that in a Year 1 class where she frequently worked with a group to allow the teacher to work with other students. She felt less confident in working with groups at the secondary level because some of the work, especially maths, was beyond her. At times she is asked to pull out groups of Year 10 students to supervise their maths and she considers that she is ill-equipped to be of assistance.

I sit in the room like a half sucked toffee. They are nasty and rude, wouldn't want to admit that they needed help. I absolutely and utterly avoid it if I can. It's fractions and stuff that's a bit beyond me. I'm of no help. I say 'Don't put me there." I'm working on getting out of it. I don't know all their names.

By contrast she also works with the RTLB on additional reading programmes and feels confident as she has been trained during her work at a primary school to do "pause, prompt, and praise". The RTLB has trained her to manage a tape–assisted reading programme, and she is able to assess student progress, graph the results, and select the next reading level.

She believes that the education system fails students who find it more difficult to learn, and that secondary school work is far too difficult for some students.

> They can't work at their own speed. These kids miss out. Their concentration span lets them down, they give up. They don't care any more and they become disruptive… The education system lets them down. Teachers think they are a lost cause. They are pushed on to the next level before they have achieved.

She also considers that behavioural expectations are too low for some students with learning problems and teachers "think their behaviour is part of the disability".

Processes for working with students vary. Sometimes there is reasonable guidance and support. At other times she is merely informed that she will be working with a particular student, and it is up to her to work out the achievement level. She said that time to plan, monitor, and evaluate "doesn't happen". She has also noticed that teachers differ in their preparedness to share the goals of their lessons with her, and with the class, and considers that she is able to be more useful when she understands where a lesson is headed. She would like all teachers to provide more guidance about their teaching intentions.

> If I was given the day before what they were doing the next day, I'd go home at night, and pencil in all the answers. There's nothing worse than going in cold, and having to work out what to do myself before I can help the children. It's like they told me to make a cake with all the stuff piled up on the bench with no instruction.

The recent appointment of a special needs co-ordinator is improving systems and support. Appraisal systems are not yet in place. She feels that if she had not had the experience of working in a primary school she would not have coped with her position at this school. She worries about the increase of "raw and green" teacher aides/kaiāwhina who "don't have a clue about rules for transporting children, cleaning them. They need to know safeguards."

The professional development

Nicky was very positive about the professional development. She was not at the staff meeting because she was ill at the time. She had heard no mention of the staff meeting by teachers or teacher aides. Although she personally had more knowledge than was in the resource she believed it would give the basic needs for any new teacher aides coming in. It would give them more insight into what the job was about. If you wanted to delve deeper this wasn't the course, but it was an introductory one. It reinforced previous learning.

After the professional development

Nicky did not identify any changes in school systems since the contract, but she said that she now made more effort to build personal relationships with her students.

> I have one boy who is very argumentative. I have made a point of getting to know him better, to ask him about his weekend etc, showing genuine interest. He hasn't had time to argue! Overall his behaviour has improved.

She has taken Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning home and has "played the tape a couple of times. I think it will be good to refer to, for example if I was going on a marae visit. It's a bit like a bible in a way." She has also found it helpful in locating vocabulary for writing reports.

Carla

Carla has been in her position for almost 3 years. She works 30 hours a week with 7 different teachers from Years 7–10. Her time is divided between 3 boys funded by ORSS and ACC. She describes her role as working alongside particular students throughout the class and "breaking down the work they (teachers) give to the class. We have to find something for them to do. We never know in advance what the work will be."

> She also helps to keep 2 of the boys calm as they can both disrupt the class. She is very willing to assist other students as well and finds that they are appreciative of her help.

She does not appear to have been well supported in terms of induction, mentoring, and professional development. She has not been given a job description, or included in appraisal and says that the only feedback she gets on her work is from the teachers of Year 7 and 8 classes. The lack of feedback is of concern to her because she worries that she may be "teaching this important child the wrong way". She has attended 2 professional development courses; one in violence prevention which was not useful, and one 2-hour course on motivation and behaviour which was helpful.

She noted that while the teachers of Year 7 and 8 classes were friendly, other teachers did not acknowledge her presence or greet her in the playground or staff room. In one instance she experienced hostility from a teacher who would call on her in class to answer questions, as if she were one of his students. In some classes teachers have not introduced her to the students. She felt that if she was given respect from the teachers she would have more respect from students.

> I think they see us as a threat, that we are going to judge their teaching. We could be helping them with other children in the class to their benefit. They don't realise that we are there to help <u>them</u>.

Her own lack of school qualifications means that she does not feel able to help students without teacher guidance. Few teachers give her any indication of their teaching plans, but she was appreciative of one teacher who involved her in teaching decisions. She felt that successful inclusion was "more about how good the teacher is than the kid".

She is looking forward to the course, and thinks she will get "lots of help" and "strategies in knowing you're doing O.K. No-one ever tells us. I'm looking for affirming of the way I work".

The contract

Carla's school participated in all components of the professional development. Carla said that the staff meeting was not well attended as it was voluntary. The teacher aides, 2 Year 7 teachers and a technology teacher attended, as well as the RTLB, the deputy principal (for part of the time), and the SENCO. Carla considered that there was little benefit in the staff meeting as "the Year 7 teachers do what they are meant to anyway. The secondary teachers should have been there". While ways of setting up processes for teachers and teacher aides to meet were discussed at the staff meeting she said that "if they don't talk to you anyway" this was unlikely to help. The teacher we interviewed had been unaware of the staff meeting, commenting: "We did not have a staff meeting on this. It may have been done in the Learning Centre".

Carla felt that the teacher aide workshop she attended was "more geared to primary". She said that because of the ways that secondary schools operated "from hour to hour" it was not possible to plan and work together. "The Year 7 teachers are a lot closer to what they said, they have more time, they have a better relationship with their students. Secondary is more like, they teach their lesson and it's 'See you later, another class is coming in'".

She was pleased that the course clarified that it is the teachers' responsibility to plan for their students. She and the others also realised that they were being underpaid for the work asked of them. "We were all peeved off at our low wages. If someone started tomorrow they would get the same as me. Some of us decided that we wouldn't keep on doing all the extra work that we were doing." When she approached the SENCO to discuss their pay scales she was told that the school was not given enough money to recognise their experience, thus teacher aides could not earn more.

The in-school follow up

This school had additional sessions on ways that teachers and teacher aides could work together to support learning. Carla was in a group that had only teacher aides in it, although another group had 7 teachers and 3 teacher aides. She said that the latter group had a more productive session and that there had been good communication within this combined group.

After the professional development

Carla felt that she had developed more confidence as a result of being better informed about roles and responsibilities of teachers and teacher aides. This was confirmed by the teacher we interviewed. Carla said that too many teachers fail to take responsibility for the behaviour of students when they have a teacher aide and she has had to push the teachers to have high expectations of these students to match those they have for the rest of the class. She gave the example of a teacher who had been "afraid of a child" and did not reprimand him for unacceptable behaviour. "I said 'Look, you're going to have to deal with this behaviour. He will throw a hissy fit, but he will learn that he can't get away with behaviour that the others would get into trouble for.' So the teacher bailed him out and he did throw a hissy fit. The teacher said 'Well that didn't work did it?' and I said 'Just wait and see.'" Carla reported that the student's behaviour rapidly improved, and his academic work also showed significant gains because the teacher gained the confidence to challenge his inappropriate behaviour.

In general she did not believe that much had changed at the school as a result of the professional development, because teachers lacked the time, the will, and the knowledge to include all students in their programmes. She acknowledged that some teachers were "brilliant" at teaching students with special needs. These teachers "talked at the level where kids are going to learn. They still learn the difficult work but in a simple way. They don't make the kids do a lot of writing. They might have to complete sentences on a worksheet or draw a diagram, but they aren't sitting and writing and writing and writing. And they use activities that involve the whole class".

She has reservations about educating all students in regular classrooms, because in most cases work is not adapted and some students have no chance of achieving. "It's heartbreaking. It's easy to see why they get bored. They have no idea of what's going on. Every child needs to go home feeling it has got somewhere."

The teacher who worked with Carla did not perceive any changes in school systems or processes but she noted that "We are changing our banding next year and will now have a class of slow learners and one with slow learners and behavioural problems. This may help".

Secondary teachers' views of advantages and disadvantages of teacher aides/kaiāwhina before the professional development

The principals and teachers we interviewed in the 4 secondary schools considered that teacher aides/kaiāwhina had an important role to play in secondary schools and that they could not manage without them. The advantages of teacher aides/kaiāwhina were perceived as:

- they are an extra help for students, and not only the (ORSS) students they were funded to help;
- they can interpret teachers' expectations for any students who need clarification;
- they can give valuable feedback on how students are understanding lessons;
- they know the student they work with much better than the classroom teacher and can make helpful suggestions; and
- they keep the student on task and prevent them from disrupting the class.

Drawbacks to teacher aides/kaiāwhina were identified as:

- some secondary level students resent having a teacher aide/kaiāwhina sitting alongside them as it signals that they are "different" and interferes with their relationships with other students;
- some teachers hand over all teaching responsibility for a student with a teacher aide/kaiāwhina to the aide;
- the teacher aide/kaiāwhina can prevent the teacher from getting to know "their" student;
- lack of time to teach untrained teacher aides/kaiāwhina the skills they need;

> "I have had to teach the teacher aide and I haven't got time to do that. I have to spend 5–10 minutes teaching that teacher aide what my teaching points are, and how this can be adapted, but there is no time built in for this."

- distraction from another adult talking to a student while the teacher is instructing the class;

> "It sounds fantastic on paper but it is disruptive to teaching. A teacher aide is not going to be sitting in there being quiet – will be talking to the child. If I want silence I won't get it. Students are very easily distracted. Other students are affected."

Information from these 4 case studies suggests that although senior management and SENCOs consider that their school would not be able to manage without them, there is also some ambivalence about their role and what is needed to support it.

The teachers we interviewed all made the point that they had received no professional development in how to work with teacher aides/kaiāwhina. They had different approaches to working with teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

One teacher said that she and other teachers in the school were concerned that they worked in isolation in relation to programmes for students with special needs, and because of this lack of communication, she did not feel that she was fully utilising teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Two teachers discussed their plans and intentions as they worked with teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the classroom, and considered that they were doing as well as they could given the constraints under which they worked.

The fourth teacher conferenced regularly with the student who had teacher aide/kaiāwhina time in her class, and took responsibility for ensuring that resources were suitable for him. She said:

> "I 'read to' students. I don't leave them to read alone. For personal reading I choose text at his level. The teacher aide mediates and supports him, by giving him the extra one-to-one that he needs to participate."

This teacher met at lunch times with the teacher aide/kaiāwhina when both were free of classroom responsibilities.

RTLBs related to the 4 schools said that the schools did not ask for help from them to develop their systems for supporting students with special needs. Two managers in secondary schools told us that they would prefer their RTLB to provide one-to-one teaching for individual students, than to assist with wider school issues.

Reasons for secondary schools' participation in the professional development

Reasons for the 4 secondary schools' participation in the professional development were varied, but were usually related to teacher aides/kaiāwhina increasing their knowledge and skills so that they would do a better job of assisting the learning of individual ORRS-funded students. An RTLB hoped that teacher aides/kaiāwhina would learn strategies to support inclusion, and a SENCO wanted teacher aides/kaiāwhina to learn how to foster friendships between students. Others had general expectations such as "To understand the scope of the job and the complexity of kids".

A school manager welcomed the professional development as a good start to some national consistency in the training and deployment of teacher aides/kaiāwhina. Three people interviewed identified the need for teachers to be trained in working with students with special needs and how to include teacher aides/kaiāwhina as part of a team.

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina were all enthusiastic about the course although they were not certain what they expected to learn from it.

Only the smallest secondary school planned to have all staff attend the whole–staff meeting. However, 2 of the 4 schools said that they had not been asked by the providers for a whole–staff meeting, and said that they would have organised this if they had been asked.

Impact of the professional development on case study secondary schools

Schools had varying experiences with the professional development. This section describes their views of the staff meeting, teacher aides' workshops, the in-school component, if they had it, changes in the ways schools worked with teacher aides/kaiāwhina, and any impact on teacher aides/kaiāwhina themselves. In some interviews there were comments about the impact of the professional development on students. We also report views of the resource itself, what use has been made of it already and what is planned, and what secondary school staff believe would be valuable next steps.

The staff meeting

No principals of the 4 case study schools attended the whole–staff meeting. This responsibility was delegated to another senior staff member or to the SENCO. Events such as industrial action reduced the time allocated to the staff meetings, and in 2 of the 4 secondary schools there were issues with the credibility or perceived competence of the presenter.

In one of these schools staff were "disenchanted with the presentation" because they felt that the presenter spent too much time on the background to the professional development, and consequently "rushed through the rest of the meeting". The RTLB for this school, although she did not attend the staff meeting, had heard that *"it may have been a source of frustration to the staff. It was landed on them. They needed some pre-preparation"*. The SENCO, however, appreciated the opportunity to have a whole–staff meeting devoted to special needs.

> "The fact that we were able to have a staff meeting about special needs has to be a plus. It was revealing to me that so many people had little idea of what has been happening here in relation to teacher aides".

In this school the staff meeting highlighted staff awareness of areas they wished to develop, and staff chose to follow through with their SENCO rather than the professional development providers.

In the second school, the contracted presenter lacked the knowledge, skills, and organisation to profitably engage staff. A teacher pointed out that:

> There were some potentially very interesting activities, but they became pointless. Some teachers were annoyed and others tried to be supportive, but it didn't go anywhere.

One deputy principal considered that the content of the staff meeting (particularly the video) appeared more relevant to the primary sector. She believed that it was too easy for secondary teachers to "shrug off" the messages because they saw "little chairs, little people" in the video.

Teacher aides we interviewed in 2 of the 4 secondary schools did not attend the staff meeting. In one case the teacher aide/kaiāwhina was ill, and in the second instance teacher aides/kaiāwhina were not invited to the meeting. The SENCO described this as "a breakdown in communication between the presenter and the school".

The third school found the staff meeting to be extremely helpful. The first staff meeting was held with key staff members, and a decision was made to hold a compulsory full staff meeting as part of the in-school component. Staff were well prepared about the purpose of the meeting by the SENCO, saw the meeting as important, and engaged fully in the activities. In this staff meeting teachers identified a range of issues and questions and attempted solutions in their faculty groups. Issues/suggestions raised by teachers at the staff meeting were:

- The need to hold meetings with teacher aides/kaiāwhina.
- Information for classroom teachers from IEPs is required. "Teachers must know what the learning goals will be."
- Job descriptions for teacher aides need to be known to teachers. Also, teachers need to know the level of their responsibility. They suggested that this information be included in the staff handbook.
- Teachers need guidelines on "what I can ask my teacher aide/kaiāwhina aide to do". Teachers were unclear if their teacher aide/kaiāwhina could be asked to work with students other than the one to which they were assigned.
- Teachers could have input into appraisals of teacher aides/kaiāwhina.
- Assessment issues, e.g. "There is an impression that the teacher aide/kaiāwhina half answers the questions in a test" and "In a practical subject do we assess the student on the work or the teacher aides/kaiāwhina?"
- All teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina should wear name badges.

- Teachers were aware that "in the staffroom some teacher aides/kaiāwhina feel very 'them' and 'us'".

The SENCO in this school considered that the staff were highly positive about the staff meeting and it resulted in "more people thinking about issues". The professional development facilitator subsequently worked with the SENCO to improve processes within the school and ran a 3 hour course specifically on topics requested by the teacher aides. It was agreed that the SENCO would also address the issues identified by teachers.

The teacher aide workshops

As with the staff meetings the calibre of the presenter was critical. In the schools where the presenter was less competent the teacher aides were critical and disappointed about the workshops.

The reaction of teacher aides in other secondary case study schools was more positive. While one teacher aide considered that she knew all of the material already, and a SENCO said "it was geared a bit low for our teacher aides/kaiāwhina," the others made comments such as "It was a good refresher", and "it reinforced previous training" and acknowledged that it was very appropriate for newly appointed teacher aides/kaiāwhina. The RTLB of one South Island school commented that "A new one (teacher aide) found it really helpful". She said that some of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina "wondered about the relevance of the Māori content".

In 2 schools it was mentioned that because teacher aides brought considerable and varied experiences to the workshops, their individual needs should have been targeted.

All of the interviewed teacher aides said that they valued the opportunity to meet with other teacher aides and to share ideas and experiences.

Impact on case study secondary teacher aides' attitudes, knowledge, and skills

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the 4 case study schools reported the following personal changes following the workshop:

- Greater efforts to build rapport with difficult students (1)
- Preparedness to stand back and encourage independence (1)
- "Standing back a bit more, forcing them to ask the teacher or another student. Trying to make them think or do more for themselves".
- Plans to go on to further education: teaching (1) and gaining a teacher-aide certificate (1).

In one of the case study schools, both the SENCO and teacher reported greater confidence in all of their teacher aides/kaiāwhina who attended the course (although the teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed did not identify the same changes herself). They both considered that the teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed now had more confidence both with students and teachers. The classroom teacher said that the teacher aide/kaiāwhina was clearer about her role and "realised that she did not have to make sure that she gets everything down - she is much more relaxed". She was able to provide specific examples of behavioural strategies that she had noticed the teacher aide using.

In a second school, the teacher could not report changes as the teacher aide no longer worked in her class. The other schools did not identify any changes.

Impact on secondary school practices

Two of the 4 secondary schools identified changes in school approaches to meeting the needs of students with special learning needs as a result of the professional development.

The school that was open to making the most changes was the school where attendance at the staff meeting was compulsory, and where the deputy principal was clearly supportive of the initiative. This school also contracted in for the in-school component which was not completed till near the end of the school year. This is described in the next section.

The second secondary school established a Special Needs committee comprising the SENCO, RTLB, Year 7 and 8 home room teachers, heads of mathematics and English, and the Guidance Counsellor. They were reviewing some of their processes such as criteria for reader/writer assistance, and the entry criteria for Year 7 students, "the kinds of tests we use and how we put them into classes. Some teachers would like a home room for Year 7s who struggle with reading, but there is an anti-streaming view in management".

Several people we interviewed noted that while the awareness of teachers had been raised by the staff meeting they would need further support and professional development in ways to teach that challenged and engaged all learners, as well as the work conditions to allow them to develop more inclusive ways of working.

The in-school component

Two of the 4 case study secondary schools participated in the in-school component of the contract.

One of the schools asked for two 2-hour sessions for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina on supporting learning, and adaptation strategies. This was attended by 7 teachers and 3 teacher aides/kaiāwhina. At this session teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina explored ways that they could work together. This session was repeated for another 9 teacher aides/kaiāwhina. The SENCO had a further 1½ hours with the course presenter to review the material covered in the first 2 sessions, and discussed the process and content of a planned induction package for teacher aides/kaiāwhina. In a further session she met with a teacher aide/kaiāwhina and helped her to clarify communication lines when seeking support and information.

The second school asked the provider to come back to provide more specific help for teacher aides. This return visit occurred after our interview but the SENCO sent us the following information about the in-school component.

> I had very mixed feedback from the final day with (the provider). The main problem seemed to be the perennial one of actually getting to the main points before running out of time. We also had teacher aides/kaiāwhina who thought that there was no relevance to the secondary class and others who thought it was too idealistic and therefore not practical. I think our staff (and probably teacher aides in general) like to be hand fed and therefore adapting ideas in their own heads to fit their particular situation is not really happening for them. This is not (the provider's) fault, but something to bear in mind for the future.
>
> The staff who are already good got pointers and were encouraged to think about their practice to some extent, although, for them, a significantly more advanced course would have been useful.

This comment highlights drawbacks which are inherent in one-off courses delivered by outsiders with limited knowledge of the course participants' context. There is insufficient time to build up a relationship with the learners and to develop understandings of what outcomes are realistic. There is also no opportunity to build on the learning, and because the development targets only one part of the provision for students with special needs, it is unlikely that there will be any lasting impact upon the way the school meets their needs. Hill, Hawke, and Taylor (2002, p. 12)[8] in discussing what makes professional development "work" in a school, stress the importance of school ownership of the professional development process and note that this takes time to develop.

Secondary school views of the resource

Overall, staff at all 4 schools found the resource to be appropriate for its purpose. One school intended to "give it to the teacher aide/kaiāwhina to read", another has shown it to staff and made it available to them, and the others were not able to indicate how it would be used. Two of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina had not seen the resource when they were interviewed, but they had access to handbooks from the course.

RTLB views of the professional development contract in secondary schools

Providers differed in the extent to which they informed RTLBs about the professional development. RTLBs in one of the provider areas had received an overview of the resource, and the RTLB we interviewed had made her own copy of the resource so that she could refer to it in the future. While RTLBs in the 3 other areas thought that the professional development was timely, they had not seen the resource or been involved in any way. Two of the RTLBs considered that they had well-established contacts with the schools and could have delivered the professional development themselves.

Barriers to effective collaboration between teachers and teacher aides and inclusive teaching in secondary schools

During the course of the case studies, a number of barriers to effective collaboration between teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina became apparent. These barriers hindered the successful teaching of students with special learning needs.

- Low priority given to this group from senior management and Board of Trustees. Two SENCOs told us that while their promotional material stressed that all students were welcome at the school the school management and governance did not actively support teachers in catering academically for students with special needs. *"When issues arise it would be good to have BOT and senior management batting for the kids."* Visible support would include adjusting class sizes when a child in a wheel chair was in a classroom so that the student could be comfortably accommodated within the classroom space and allocating classes so that all staff were expected to teach those assigned to them. At present she said, there was no expectation or policy stating: *"We accept all children into our classroom"* and it was acceptable for teachers to avoid teaching certain students. She also felt that staff who were responsible for students with special needs tended to be marginalised as *"the people who do that, so we don't have to worry"*.

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[8] Hill, J., Hawk, K., Taylor, K. (2002). Professional development. What makes it work? ***Set:*** *Research Information for teachers, 2, p. 12.* Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

- The secondary timetable:
  - makes it difficult for teachers to get to know their students and appreciate their particular needs;
  - works against students developing strong relationships with their teachers;
  - tends to compartmentalise learning, preventing students from developing more than superficial understandings and making links between different kinds of knowledge; and
  - makes it difficult to allow time for teachers, SENCOs, and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to plan and evaluate together.
- Low expectations for students. These reduced expectations, combined with the segmented organisation of secondary schools and the lack of teacher knowledge of more innovative teaching strategies, have adverse consequences for student learning and social development.
- Teacher uncertainty about how to work with "different" students. Several teachers told us that they needed more information about specific conditions or syndromes so that they would "know what to do better". They appeared to think that there were uniform "answers" to teaching students with particular disabilities, and that methods for teaching these students might be very different from others.
- Teachers generally do not know how to plan for a full range of learners and there is a lack of appreciation that students can learn at different rates and levels, meet a series of personal benchmarks, and achieve success. As one SENCO (a previous primary school teacher) reported:

> "There needs to be an overall acknowledgement that these kids need to be taught what they need to know. Take them from the level they are at, not at the level they are supposed to be on. When you get pressure from outside some teachers will give into it."

- Assessment practices tend to be commonly prescribed, so all students are required to be assessed on the same material, when this is frequently inappropriate for students with particular learning needs. The pressures of external assessment were also mentioned by several secondary participants. Assessment is frequently "computer driven" and "these students don't fit the programme".
- Schools tend to devise solutions such as streaming to teaching problems (e.g. a wide range of student achievement levels) that address the surface features of problems, rather than tackling the issue at a deeper level, e.g. by focusing teacher professional development in teaching diverse learners). Ironically, it appears that students with more severe needs may spend more time in regular classrooms than some students with ill-defined needs such as "behavioural difficulty" because of the availability of teacher aide hours for ORSS.
- Class sizes were seen to be too big for teachers to provide the individualised attention that they believed these students required. Few teachers used grouping practices that included ORSS–funded students. Teacher aides appear to function as a safety valve for teachers who already feel overworked. Few teachers appeared to use strategies that capitalised on peer-mediated learning strategies as described in Cameron, (2002)[9].
- Lack of training for SENCOS. One of the SENCOs had recently completed an extramural course in special education at a college of education which she had found to be extremely worthwhile. She, and others interviewed, felt that properly trained SENCOs would enhance the provision of high-quality and appropriate learning programmes for all students.

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[9] Cameron, M. (2002) Peer influences on learning. ***Set:*** *No 3*. Wellington: New Zealand Council For Educational Research.

- Lack of specific resources. In one case study school a teacher talked about her knowledge of ICT resources which she believed would allow staff to teach in more innovative ways, but said there was no funding to buy them, and "our old computers can't run these programmes even if we could afford to buy them". This was confirmed by the school's SENCO and RTLB. Several teachers noted that there are not enough resources on secondary school curriculum topics that can be used by students with limited reading skills.
- Inadequate time for the SENCO role. SENCOs devoted considerable unpaid time to their role. All had teaching responsibilities as well as co-ordination roles. One SENCO said: "I can't do everything. I have to eat and sleep too. I never leave here before six and have 2–3 hours' work later in the evening".
- Need for professional development for teachers in a wider range of pedagogical methods. "Some are still locked into the formal stand-at-the-front methods". (SENCO).
- Ministry of Education funding for payment of teacher aides/kaiāwhina does not reflect their employment contracts. Schools therefore tend to reduce the hours of teacher aides/kaiāwhina when there is a salary increase and do not top up this funding from other sources of school funding. This has significant financial and motivational impact for teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Primary schools

Table 25 shows the size and decile rating of each case study school, the number of teacher aides/kaiāwhina employed, and how they were funded.

Table 25: Primary case study schools

School	Decile	Size	Teacher aides/ kaiāwhina	Student ORRS funding
A	3	427	4	1 ORRS
C	8	332	7	5 ORRS
E	10	59	2	2 ORRS
F	7	480	3	
G	3	155	4	2 ORRS
I	6	21	1	1 ORRS
J	9	270	4	2 ORRS
L	2	167	3	2 ORRS

Primary school approaches to meeting the learning needs of students with special needs

The 8 primary school approaches to students with special learning needs tended to fall into 3 groups. The first approach (2 schools) saw student failure to learn as intrinsic to students themselves, not as an outcome of unsuccessful classroom teaching. Students who found the regular class programme difficult were seen to need "additional help", not more focused and targeted teaching within the classroom. There was a belief that "one-to-one" help with an untrained adult or parent volunteer would help address the problem, and the classroom teacher took little responsibility for monitoring the "pull-out" programme, or linking it to the classroom programme. When teacher aides/kaiāwhina worked with students they tended to work on programmes that were different from those of the rest of the class.

The second approach tended to see meeting a diversity of learning needs as part of expected teaching practice. Two schools were in this category, and the principal was working strenuously to lift teacher expectations for all students in another school. All children were seen to learn best alongside their peers participating in regular classroom programmes, sometimes with the support of a teacher aide. Activities and goals were adjusted to accommodate a range of skill levels. In general, teachers of younger students appeared more confident in their ability to cater for a range of needs than teachers of older students. In the case of ORSS–funded students, they relied on teacher aides to provide the necessary classroom support, but ensured that these students were included in regular class activities as much as was feasible.

The other 3 schools' approach was mixed. They tended to believe that in an " ideal world" all children could be catered for in the classroom, but felt they had not yet gained the knowledge and skill to achieve this. They had a belief in the ability of teacher aides/kaiāwhina to accomplish what they, as teachers, were not able to achieve.

ORSS funding and its impact on perceptions of the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina

We found that schools tended to define "special needs" as students with high or very high needs because the professional development was related to teacher aides/kaiāwhina and it is ORRS– funded students who more typically have teacher aides/kaiāwhina. Apart from one school, all teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed worked primarily with ORRS-funded students. This may have contributed to a picture of teacher aides working mostly one-to-one with students, when teacher aides funded by other sources may be working with groups of children on specific programmes or providing general help to the teacher within the classroom.

There was a strong tendency for school staff and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to see teacher aides/kaiāwhina as "belonging" to individual ORRS-funded students. Guidelines for parents, caregivers and families, and whānau[10] state that funding is "to support students according to their specific needs" (p. 16). There is mention of schools spending this money on direct service provision to individual students, in contrast to the SEG grant which "may be spent on professional development, staffing, new resources and materials to support students with special education needs who do not receive assistance through any other special education initiative" (p.18). The latest guidelines for

[10] Ministry of Education 2002 *Meeting Special Education Needs at School, Information for Parents, Caregivers and Families,*

schools on the Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes[11] have comments like the funding is to "meet the needs of the individual students involved", "teacher aide hours needed to support a student", and "the time a teacher aide delivers a service to a student", which tend to reinforce this perception that the teacher aide role revolves around individual students. However, the new guidelines do also stress that the scheme is intended to be a flexible resource package, and reminds schools that they "need to take into account non-direct contact time - e.g. IEPs, time to meet with teachers, breaks, when they use the funding to set the teachers hours". The new guidelines make it clearer to schools that non-direct contact time can be funded through ORSS.

However, some interviewees believed that they would be in breach of the guidelines if teacher aides/kaiāwhina were to work with students other than those for whom they have been specifically employed.

> "The message is given to schools from SES that the teacher aide/kaiāwhina is specifically for the child. There is a need to clarify roles – can a teacher aide/kaiāwhina work with the class or a group while the teacher aide/kaiāwhina works with the special needs child in a group?" *(Principal)*

This perception had the effect of excluding students from opportunities to learn to work independently, and experiencing informal classroom contact with peers. It also had the effect of isolating the student from the usual teacher-student interaction and stigmatising them as "different" because they were frequently separated from their peers.

A minority of teacher aides/kaiāwhina saw part of their role as support for the teacher, by working with groups which may or may not include the ORRS-funded student, or by supervising the whole class to enable the teacher to work with students needing extra teacher help.

In several of the case study schools, principals or SENCOs reported that provision for ORRS– funded students needed to be topped up from the school's SEG grant, making less funding available for students whom they saw as "missing out" on ORRS funding. Staff appeared to believe that the ORRS funding should cover the full cost of the teacher aide, and resented spending SEG funding to support ORRS students. In 3 schools, the SEG grant was used to support students whom school staff thought should have had ORRS funding. They felt that this resulted in inadequate funding for students who had more moderate learning needs.

Employment conditions for teacher aides/kaiāwhina in primary schools

All 8 teacher aides/kaiāwhina we interviewed had job descriptions, but not all were current. Two teacher aides/kaiāwhina recalled seeing a job description at some time in the past, and 2 teacher aides/kaiāwhina said that they did more than was specified in their job descriptions.

Three reported that they worked more hours than they were paid, because they considered that "their" student needed additional support.

> "I do a lot of extra hours for free. Knowing that I'm there makes him a lot calmer. I can't say I'm not coming because I'm not being paid." *(Teacher aide decile 9 school)*

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[11] Ministry of Education. 4 Nov 2002. *Joint statement to schools - Ongoing and Reviewable Resourcing Schemes* (ORRS).

Six of the 8 job descriptions emphasised support for students rather than for teachers. None mentioned encouragement of student participation, and only one emphasised the improvement of student learning.

Half of the 8 teacher aides/kaiāwhina were appraised regularly, although 2 of those who were not formally appraised considered that teachers let them know that they "did a good job".

All primary teacher aides/kaiāwhina participated in IEP meetings, and one teacher aide/kaiāwhina provided a full written report for these meetings.

None of the 8 teacher aides/kaiāwhina went to staff meetings, although some considered they probably could if they wished to attend. Only one had any desire to attend, as she considered that it would be informative. One did not think there was any need for her to attend, one did not attend because she would not be paid, and the others gave family reasons, such as wishing to be with their own children. All principals were supportive of teacher aides/kaiāwhina attendance at staff meetings, but were reluctant to ask them to attend because they would be unpaid.

One school provided regular release time for the teacher aides/kaiāwhina and class teacher to meet. Five of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina felt that they were able to talk about short-term plans during class time, and generally felt that they knew what to do with students.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina varied in their previous professional development. One had a degree in psychology, another had been a dental nurse, and others brought experience in retail work and parenting. Three teacher aides/kaiāwhina had completed several papers towards teacher aide certificates; two had paid for these themselves, but in one case the school had paid for most of the cost. One teacher aide/kaiāwhina had paid for previous professional development in her own time.

The role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in primary schools

Vignettes of 3 teacher aides/kaiāwhina follow to illustrate the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the 8 primary schools. The first vignette illustrates the work of a teacher aide/kaiāwhina in a supportive school context, the second approach outlined previously. The second shows how a school is attempting to shift teacher aides/kaiāwhina and teachers towards more inclusive practice, and the third shows the difficulties experienced by a teacher aide/kaiāwhina in a school with the first approach to students with special needs. The vignettes include information gathered after the teacher aide professional development to look at its impact.

Cynthia

Cynthia works in a school that has a clear view of the roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiāwhina. There is a shared responsibility for the learning of all students. There is a clear vision statement for the achievement of students with special needs, supported by coherent policies, practices, and resourcing.

In this school teacher aides/kaiāwhina are seen as important members of a team that provides quality educational provision to all its students. The SENCO of the school said that the ethos of "children come first" underpins all organisational decisions.

The SENCO has.3 release to support teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to meet the needs of all students. This time is used for weekly meetings with the teacher aides/kaiāwhina, meeting with syndicate leaders about children with special learning needs, liaising with the RTLB and other external supports, and releasing teachers to allow them to do observations and assessments, meet with their teacher aide/kaiāwhina, meet with other professionals, or attend professional development.

Cynthia has been employed at the school for 3 months. She was originally a parent helper and found that she enjoyed working with children. She works mornings only. Most of her work is with 9–year–old Robyn, a child with significant developmental delay, including speech and language difficulties. Robyn has ORRS funding. Cynthia also works with a group of students on reading extension activities. She described her role with Robyn as helping her to participate in small groups, interact with other students in a "talk to learn" oral language programme, assist her with reading, and speech language therapy.

I just help her to develop concepts and understandings. I'm helping her to learn her colours and shapes, and trying to get her to talk more. The more she can say for herself the better. I help her to develop routines and follow rules, and to develop independence. To communicate with other people.

Cynthia has been given considerable support to help her work effectively with Robyn. The school arranged for GSE to help her to run the "talk to learn" with Robyn and 4 other students as part of a group. The work that she is doing in this group links with the concepts that are being developed in class.

The speech language therapist has shown her ways to encourage and build upon Robyn's language.

She was taught how to use pause, prompt, and praise by the RTLB when she was a parent helper and uses this now in her work with students.

Every Monday during school assembly she meets with Robyn's teacher to coordinate their planning for the week. The teacher is showing her how to keep records of Robyn's learning achievements. She says there is "lots of communication and feedback".

She thinks that the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina is an important one.

> We can assist an awful lot. Teachers have big classes. We can be a reinforcement and a backup. Teachers know what they want to do with the children, but they don't always have the time. We are there to assist them to get there.

The class teacher appreciates Cynthia's facilitation of activities so that Robyn is able to participate at her level. If there was no teacher aide Robyn would be left to cut and paste." When Cynthia is not there in the afternoons, the programme is less formal and Robyn just fits in. It's very much an inclusive policy and it works because of the way the day is structured.

The RTLB described the school as non-judgmental and very flexible. She said that teachers had a diverse range of teaching styles which supported different students' needs. "The school thinks very carefully about what we can do, what we can't do, and where we need help."

The professional development

In this school the staff meeting was held after the teacher aide workshops. Cynthia thought that The staff meeting was fine but there was not a lot to do in this school.

Cynthia was disappointed in the teacher aide course because she thought that there was not enough practical hands-on and she did not think that the presenter was responsive to individual questions from participants. She felt that the presenter lacked familiarity with current primary school practice, but "she kept telling us how many years' experience she had".

After talking with other teacher aides she was surprised at the differences in their working environments, and appreciative of her own. If you can't even have a cup of tea with a teacher, how can you ask her for help?

After the professional development

Despite her feelings about the course content Cynthia acknowledged that "I learnt more than I thought." She found that the course helped her to "know exactly what I am expected to do. She made it clear that the programming etc. is the teachers' responsibility. She gave a view of how the system runs, e.g. who is allowed to approach who."

After this course she attended a behaviour management course with a new teacher aide and commented that "she (the new teacher aide) said things that I would have said once but not now." When asked to elaborate she said

> Well we were discussing behaviour and what to do if kids won't do what they are told. She said 'If a child won't do it, why don't you make him stand up and sing Ba Ba Black Sheep in front of the class?' I would have thought that was a good idea before. Now I know it wouldn't work.

She did not think that there needed to be any changes in the ways teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina worked together at her school, but was pleased that the school asked the local RTLB to organise the behaviour management course for teacher aides in response to the teacher aides' request. She felt that she probably talks more now with teachers about exactly what they expect her to do, and her expectations for the students she works with have been lifted.

The classroom teacher she worked with felt that Cynthia's confidence had "gone through the roof". She had also noticed that Cynthia was using skills that she had not demonstrated before.

> She is no longer being just a parent helper, she is a professional. She is more tuned into them. She makes eye contact with them, talks to them, not at them. Her expectations for what Robyn can do are on a higher plane. It is all credit to Cynthia that Robyn is starting to read now. It was her initiative really, and she is using the skills that she learned.

Cynthia would appreciate the opportunities to further her knowledge, particularly in reading, but would prefer them to be offered by local RTLBs. Her reasons were that they were:

> more hands on, day-to-day, they cover what you want to know, they are 'more there', they know what the system is like today, and they have a handle on schools in their area.

Amy

Amy has worked for 6 years in the largest primary school in the case studies. The school has a newly appointed principal who has challenged the school's previous use of teacher aides/kaiāwhina. The teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the school had originally been employed several years ago to help with administrative tasks and there had been a good match between their knowledge and skills and their work. Over time the roles of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina had changed to include work with individual students and small groups. Amy said that teacher aides/kaiāwhina did the best that they could, but neither they nor the teachers had received any training for their changed roles. Until the new principal was appointed, the usual school practice was for teacher aides/kaiāwhina to withdraw students from the classroom to give them "extra help".

The class teacher we interviewed had previously worked as a teacher aide/kaiāwhina for 9 years before she gained her teaching degree. She felt that the school had been unwelcoming to students with special needs in the past. "Before, I think that children with special needs didn't come here or they didn't stay here."

The principal identified a previous lack of teacher planning, lack of teacher supervision, and lack of systems to monitor outcomes. Although the deputy principal had an additional management unit for ensuring the students with special needs were effectively catered for, the new principal considered that the deputy principal had used the time for the administration of "pull out" programmes of unknown worth, rather than on strengthening school processes and knowledge.

When a teacher identified a problem with a student, there were no processes to identify reasons for difficulties. It was assumed that the problem lay within the child, and that the "solution" was to provide extra help. Untrained and unsupervised teacher aides/kaiāwhina were then given the responsibility for providing suitable help. Some teacher aides/kaiāwhina had worked for years with one student and tended to take "ownership" of their assigned student.

The principal thought that some teachers were better at providing support and guidance than others. Some teachers had become accustomed to teacher aides/kaiāwhina taking responsibility for some students, and were unused to having to do the extra work that collective responsibility requires.

The 1999 ERO report took a more global view:

> The special needs programmes are appropriately targeted, planned and implemented to address identified learning and behavioural needs…
>
> The well co-ordinated special needs programmes have enhanced the learning of a significant number of students. Programmes are reviewed and modified where necessary to address emerging needs…

Amy is funded from the school's SEG grant as are all of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina. She spends much of her time in a Year 5 class. The teacher described the class as having 27 students, four with significant literacy needs, and 7 with literacy skills well above their chronological age. The class includes Tony, a student with Aspergers Syndrome who has significant behavioural needs, and a student with ADD.

Amy has worked with Tony over a period of years and she believes that he needs her close to him because "he can't keep on task for more than 2 minutes". She believes that he does very little work when she is not present. Recently the time she works with him has been reduced to 7.5 hours a week, "to wean him off me". Amy is no longer paid to supervise him at lunchtimes, but she said that:

> He likes to come to my room. He brings a friend with him and they play on the computer. I try to keep back but he likes to keep me included." The teacher she works with believes that a mutual dependency has developed between Amy and Tony. She said that Amy had been used to taking Tony from the classroom and teaching him individually. The teacher considered that Tony was manipulating Amy into completing the work for him, in the belief that this was helpful to him.

Her motivation was to make sure that he was happy all day. She would give up her own lunch time to make sure that he wasn't hurting anyone, even when she was told not to, because she was so committed.

She had found it difficult to share responsibility for Tony's educational programme with Amy, and to encourage her to work with other students because of Amy's sense of personal ownership of Tony.

> I don't need an interpreter. When I say `Get your homework books out' I don't need her to say 'Tony, get your homework book out' ".

She also says that teacher aides/kaiāwhina can prevent the teacher from developing an interactive teaching relationship with the child they are working with. "It's very important for the teacher to know what's going on with that child. For them to get to work in groups with others, so that they can learn how to 'be' with others and learn in a group."

She also noted that reliance on one-to-one time with a teacher aide/kaiāwhina led to dependency and barriers to relationships with other students. If work is conducted outside the classroom, the student misses out on accessing the regular learning opportunities available to other students, and can avoid challenging work.

The school used their RTLB to help Amy to understand that her role was to help Tony to become more independent. She and the class teacher also helped other students to develop strategies to encourage Tony's positive behaviours.

Amy did not find this shift in her role easy. She did not know what she expects to get from the professional development course. "I'll tell you when I've done it," she said.

The professional development

The principal in Amy's school was positive about the professional development, which she described as "hugely timely". She considered that the whole-school staff meeting was a strength, and she ensured that staff were aware that it would take the full 2 hours. She believed that it was more beneficial than the presenters were given credit for. Some staff did not feel as "safe" as they would have liked, but they realised that special needs were not being well managed. "What it did was help people to share experiences that highlighted the lack of understanding about teacher aides and what teachers could and should be doing and aren't. There was some frank stuff, it highlighted the things that weren't being done, the co-ordination, the lack of thinking through issues. It forced a forum. That's the benefit of an outside facilitator and it highlighted that we needed some support. The SENCO herself acknowledged that she needed help. She has really enjoyed working with (the presenter)". The principal said that despite her own earlier efforts to effect change "It needed someone else to come in and say it and then it's revolutionary."

The classroom teacher considered that the staff meeting "made a huge difference. The meeting was long enough for all the points to be properly covered and for people to realise that the teacher aide's/kaiāwhina role is to help students to be come more independent".

The principal appreciated the access to follow-up as she believed that "any delivery of a blanket thing never meets people's needs". She felt that the professional development helped develop ownership of change, particularly with the SENCO, as the presenter had spent time with her helping to set up better systems. She said that the previous year she had written special needs booklets, but until the professional development, staff did not refer to them. "It's heightened everyone's awareness to think about things".

The SENCO also said that the staff meeting had helped her in her role as staff now knew that her expectations were those of the Ministry of Education. She said there is now "less grizzling about having to plan for students with teacher aides/kaiāwhina". She and the presenter have been working on updating the special needs handbook, and on developing a teacher aide handbook. She thinks that she is now managing teacher aides/kaiāwhina better. "Instead of hearing individual children read, put them into tape assisted reading. And we have set up senior buddy reading, not just for the children with special needs but all children".

Amy agreed that the staff meeting was very successful. "A lot of the teachers were astounded at what we do". She said that teachers had been unaware that teacher aides/kaiāwhina regularly missed out on morning tea because they were on first aid duty. "Now they aren't rostered at all. Teachers do it".

She was a little ambivalent about the teacher aide/kaiāwhina workshops. "They were quite good, but I don't think I got a heck of a lot out of it. You often get quite a lot from meeting other teacher aides/kaiāwhina. I definitely felt that it was more for teacher aides/kaiāwhina who were just starting out." She did not think the material on the Treaty of Waitangi was relevant for teacher aides. "Our job is not to be doing these things. It's just a waste of time."

After the professional development

As a result of the professional development, the SENCO feels more supported in her role. She now holds weekly meetings with teacher aides. Amy said that systems are better in that there are formalised processes, and records of student progress. However, she does not feel that she gets "a heck of a lot of positive feedback from staff".

The classroom teacher thought that the professional development "gave Amy the confidence to stand back and to recognise that student dependence isn't the goal". She had noticed that where previously Amy would "get out a chair and pull it up alongside him", she would now stand back and if he was settled would offer "If you don't need me I'll…." She reported that "When the teacher aide/kaiāwhina stood back, Tony made friends. He didn't want to go to her room at lunch time any more. He said `I've got other friends now'. He didn't need her in the classroom. He's been invited to birthday parties, sleepovers and so on.".While Amy is pleased that Tony no longer needs her she feels that she has been disadvantaged by having her hours reduced. "I have been penalised for being successful, " she said.

Sandra

Sandra has been employed at her small country school for nearly 3 years. She partially completed a SES Teacher Aides/Kaiāwhina certificate 5 years ago in another city and has had many opportunities for professional development, but none since she has been employed at this school. "I thought it would be too difficult to replace me for the day." She works mostly with a boy with autism, and she has tracked his progress extensively, by writing anecdotal records daily (2–4 pages while he is working). She has filled 7 exercise books on his progress.

She does not believe that her skills have been fully utilised. Because she is viewed as an aide to the child, teachers are reluctant to ask her to do photocopying etc., which she is happy to do. As well, the skills she developed in her last position have not been used ("I don't think they have ever read my CV") while she is given tasks that she is not trained for.

> One day they gave me a big package and said 'We want you to run a perceptual motor programme'. No training, no discussion. I worked it all out. I did assessments every day and handed them in at the end of the week. No-one ever came in to see what I was doing. Eventually other people running perceptual motor programmes came to see what I was doing.

She described her initial experience with the child with autism as traumatic.

> There was no IEP for 6 months. I didn't know anything about him. I used to go home crying every day, and my husband would say 'for heaven's sake give up, it's not worth it'. If I hadn't had other experience before I came here they would have gone through three or four teacher aides by now.

She saw her main roles as managing this student's behaviour in the classroom, as well as "precision teaching" with other groups of students. However she will just be told "help These students with spelling". She doesn't know for how long, or what their needs are. She described assessing each student individually, deciding on 10 words and repeating them until learnt. Results were graphed. However there was no link to the classroom programme, and "no proper liaison". In this instance she feels the work was ineffective, because the same children were sent back to her for extra help at a later date and they could no longer spell the words. She described her work with these teachers as "rather unpredictable". Her job description merely "states the hours and pay rates and specifies duties as directed by the classroom teacher".

Sandra does not get together with teachers to collaboratively plan, monitor, or evaluate student progress, except at IEP time for ORRS-funded students. Even then it is not specified what exactly she is required to do. She keeps very detailed records of student progress, but *"they don't get used by the classroom teacher"*. On one day a week the class teacher has her .2 beginning teacher release time. During this time the relieving teacher "gives me all her planning. I grab it and I know exactly what is going to happen. I love that".

While she gets informal feedback from teachers on her work "I have never known an appraisal. We've never sat down and talked about my work". She says that she has never been invited to a staff meeting and has no idea when they are held. However she couldn't stay after school as she has to pick up her children from the school bus. She has no pigeon hole or place to receive staff memos.

She knew nothing about the teacher aide/kaiāwhina professional development. She had not been given the interview questions. Her reaction to the contents of the professional development was "Oh gosh, this is a lot. How long is this going to last? You've got weeks here."

She is enthusiastic about the professional development opportunity. "I just want to get up to date with what's happening – and if there's anything new, use it for the betterment of students."

The professional development

Sandra was enthusiastic about the teacher aide workshop. She described the course tutor as "excellent" and the course as "refreshing. It brought everything back. I love working with the other teacher aides in the scenarios. It was mind-boggling, brilliant. There are some really talented people out there. She felt professionally affirmed by the opportunity. "When you give out every day to children it's lovely to think that someone thinks the teacher aides are worth investing in. That they'd put time into you. The teachers are always off to courses, it's nice to have some PD too."

She was disappointed that the teacher in most need of understanding how to work with teacher aides refused to attend the staff meeting at the school.

After the professional development

Sandra did not consider that the professional development had impacted significantly on her practice, but thought that her observation skills had been heightened, and that she now focused on "looking for stuff that is concrete and objective". There had been no changes in school practice that she could identify.

When asked about challenges she still had in relation to her work, she commented that the funding had been cut for a student, and it had been difficult for her and the other teacher aide to find out how their hours would be affected. "Last week we had to ask what are we going to be doing and who are we going to be working with? I'm now with another child but there has been no handover discussion. It's frustrating." She described her need for future professional development as "How to control a classroom when the teacher isn't there. It's just a small, basic thing, and it is something that teacher aides are left with at times." At the end of the year other ORSS–funded children were leaving so "I might have to fade into the background. I won't find out till the last minute on the last day" she said.

School perceptions of the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina

As in the secondary case studies, the teacher aides/kaiāwhina we were given to interview worked primarily with ORRS funded students. These students had high or very high needs, and schools varied in their acceptance of them. In 6 of the 8 case study primary schools, teacher aides/kaiāwhina worked somewhat flexibly with a range of students, including ORSS–funded students. An exception was a teacher aide/kaiāwhina who had worked with a particular student for some years who found it difficult to see her role as anything other than looking after this child. The teacher she worked with said "She was paid to look after _____ and that's what she was doing. She was unwittingly acting as a barrier between him and the rest of the class. He manipulated her to complete writing tasks for him, including PAT tests".

In another school, a teacher aide/kaiāwhina had paid for her own limited Authority to Teach, so that she could help to teach the class. The teacher she worked with described her as "like an extra teacher in the classroom".

Other schools however are unclear about the roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiāwhina, particularly when they are funded by ORRS.

Primary schools' reasons for participation in the professional development

The 8 primary schools had a range of reasons for participation in the professional development. Generally, principals were very appreciative of professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina at no cost to the school. Only one school appeared to have drifted into the contract without thought. The principal of this school signed up because she thought "we had to".

The principals considered that this professional development acknowledged the value that the Ministry of Education placed on the place of teacher aides/kaiāwhina as part of the system, and there were many comments about the "affirmation" this would give teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Few of the 8 principals appeared to realise that the professional development also aimed to improve school knowledge and strategies, though as we have seen in the vignette of Amy, one principal saw it as a timely way to bring about necessary change.

Some schools had realistic expectations of the professional development. They typically saw the course as the first step in an ongoing programme of professional development that would support the establishment of a skilled workforce of teacher aides/kaiāwhina. They saw it as a useful overview that could be developed further in subsequent professional development, and stressed that a "one-off", "one-shot" course would have little impact on teacher aides/kaiāwhina skills in assisting students to learn. Several identified the need for teachers to develop greater skills in curriculum adaptation themselves, and to learn how to work effectively with teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Other schools tended to expect more than could be reasonably expected of a short course. These schools wanted teacher aides/kaiāwhina to gain an appreciation of specific disabilities, developmental progressions of children, and greater knowledge of how to help students at particular levels.

Some schools were unable to be specific about what they expected from the contract. They thought that the teacher aide/kaiāwhina would "improve her knowledge and get ideas", or "learn some tricks".

In one of the schools it was thought that the professional development would make the work of the teacher easier as exemplified by this teacher comment:

> "I am pleased this is happening. We need these teacher aides/kaiāwhina as long as mainstreaming continues and we need them to work effectively, make classrooms run more smoothly with less stress on the teacher."

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina were, without exception, enthusiastic about the professional development regardless of their prior experience. Some teacher aides/kaiāwhina had up to 12 years' experience and had attended many courses, but were still eligible for the professional development because they did not have a completed formal qualification. They relished the opportunity to have paid professional development, and looked forward to meeting teacher aides/kaiāwhina from other schools as well as being informed about current policies and possible new strategies. Several were seeking confirmation that they were "doing the right things" with their students as they had not been given feedback within their schools. Some had concerns about the breadth of the contract, feeling that it was attempting to cover too much in 2 days, but overall, teacher aides/kaiāwhina were looking forward to the professional development.

Impact of the professional development on case study primary schools

The staff meeting

Principals were all positive about the intentions of the professional development, and 6 of the 8 principals we interviewed considered that the staff meeting was very worthwhile. This included a principal of a 2-teacher school who "had the staff meeting on the phone" as it saved time. Two principals had issues with the calibre of their presenter.

Principals felt that the strengths of the staff meeting were the opportunity to present a consistent message to all staff, and for teachers and teacher aides to discuss their roles and points of view with each other. One principal said that "The staff meeting was a real strength. It put everyone in the loop and it wasn't just a course for the teacher aides".

Five of the 7 teachers interviewed (one had left the school since the first interviews) considered that the staff meeting was beneficial, with 2 of these teachers saying that it affirmed the good practice of their school. Teachers commented that they appreciated the opportunities to talk openly with teacher aides about issues of concern and ways to improve the way they worked together. One teacher added that the staff meeting helped the principal to address the attitudinal barriers of teachers.

The teacher in a school with an ineffective presenter felt that the staff meeting achieved little because the presenter was "away with the fairies", while a teacher in another school was resistant to the message that teachers were responsible for teaching all of the students in their class. This teacher said "The teacher hasn't got the knowledge of the child that the teacher aide has. They've got the experience".

There was criticism of 2 presenters, one because of her disorganisation ("*She couldn't even use the OHP, she read off the transparency.")* and the other because she appeared uninterested and unable to connect with the teachers.

> "She was not in the real world at all. She was in her cardboard box.. Whether she knew it or not she was going to give it to us. She was very inflexible and when we challenged her she said 'I'm just passing the message on. This is what I've been asked to do". (Teacher aide)

Two of the 8 teacher aides interviewed reported that it was encouraging to see that teachers gained a lot of awareness about teacher aides*:* "a) that we're here, b) what we do, and c) how we do it. They really had no idea". The two SENCOs who were not principals spoke favourably of the staff meeting component of the professional development.

The teacher aide workshops

Six principals made comment about the teacher aide workshops. Five principals said that the course was too basic for their teacher aides because they were quite experienced. Principals made comments such as "They knew a lot of the stuff, it would have been great for new teacher aides." and "We didn't realise how basic it was going to be. If we had seen the kitset at the beginning we could have made an informed decision about who to send." One principal believed that her teacher aides "did not get a lot out of it. Some were already experienced, while others had different expectations and a different mindset".

One principal who had participated in the initial Ministry of Education stakeholder consultation about the professional development contract said: "There was not enough choice. We were told that they could identify their specific needs". However, the teacher aide at this school was in fact very satisfied with the degree to which teacher aides' specific needs were addressed: "It was very good. We could ask for specific help and we got it."

Most teacher aides were positive about the workshops, with the opportunity to meet with other teacher aides being seen as particularly helpful by 6 participants. One replied: "Yes it met my needs. I gained confidence. The videos were good, and getting a chance to talk to other teacher aides was brilliant". Three commented that it was a little basic for their needs with "not enough hands-on" and 2 indicated

that they enjoyed the second day better than the first: "I'm more interested in how to help the children than in government policies".

One teacher aide described the course as "brilliant" noting that the presenter was very skilled at working with teacher aides with a wide variety of needs. There was criticism of one presenter in that she was seen to be out of touch with primary schools, and unable to respond meaningfully to questions.

One teacher aide was not able to attend the teacher aide workshop because of the decision of 2 other teacher aides from her school who had attended the first day of the earlier course to miss the second day, and cancel the course for the other teacher aides/kaiāwhina at the school because they did not consider the course to be beneficial other than for new teacher aides.

Only two RTLBs had information about the 2-day teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshop, with one reporting that she had heard that it was appropriate for an introductory course and the other indicating that she thought the course should have been directed at SENCOs followed by release time for SENCOs to train their teacher aides. "*The SENCO is pivotal to the success of inclusion, as he/she knows the special nature of the school*."

No teachers were able to comment on the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshop, and some did not know that it had occurred.

Impact for teacher aides/kaiāwhina

Two teachers commented that they could see changes in their teacher aides after the course, particularly in terms of greater confidence in what they were doing.

Five of the teacher aides themselves thought that they had gained from the course as these comments illustrate:

> I'm stepping back more, looking at what I am doing, am I giving my child time to think, are my instructions clear enough."

When asked for example of specific strategies she now used she said *"I'm getting the child to repeat instructions. This helps me realise that I have been unclear."* Another teacher aide recalled how she used a strategy that she had seen on a video in the workshop.

> There was a little girl swinging on her chair just like ___ does. All the teacher did was to shape her hands like a chair with four legs and put them on the table and say 'Put the chair legs down'. I did it when I got back and it worked. In the past I would have said 'Could you please not swing on your chair.

She also indicated other strategies that she had learned:

> Don't rush him. I am understanding the benefits of waiting a little longer, and I'm getting more out of him. He is coming forward more.

Another teacher aide noted that immediately after the course she made deliberate efforts to use the strategies she had learnt but "then you tail off*"* particularly as she worked in a school that did not support teacher aides well.

The in-school component

Two of the primary schools participated in the in-school component. In the first school the provider worked with the SENCO and the assistance was seen as timely and helpful. The school wished to review its communication systems and procedures, and further develop expectations that classroom teachers were responsible for planning. The provider also assisted the SENCO to refine IEP processes, and prepare a teacher aide induction handbook. In the eyes of the SENCO the in-school support was:

> The first year I've had any support at all. Special needs was not my strength. Every year I've worried about it, knowing it wasn't going well. Having (the provider) in here has made a huge difference. She came one day for two hours and then came back and we talked about what I had done. I gave her a copy of our special needs book and she made some suggestions. She's coming back again. It's neat to know what others are doing. Why reinvent the wheel?

In the second school the provider returned to help the school develop their goals further. This included finding strategies for teachers and teacher aides to meet, developing guidelines for teacher aide/teacher management, and developing an induction package for teacher aides. The support was appreciated although the principal felt that a lot was expected of the SENCO. "There seemed to be a lot of work left for ___. She seemed to take the brunt of it. I don't think she got as much assistance as she needed. She is very conscientious - if the person wasn't, it would have fallen over".

It appeared that the principal in this school did not realise that the support was to help the school carry out its ongoing responsibilities more effectively. This was probably linked to her strong belief that schools needed more help and support to manage the variety of student needs that schools now had.

> I've come to a point where we believe we are doing more than a school can be expected to do. The responsibilities that teacher aides carry - one if you don't clear her chest the liquid builds up and she could die. Another child stopped breathing and had to be taken to hospital. It is way beyond what any educator should be expected to do. If the teacher aide is away we are stuck, you just can't call anyone in.

In this school the teacher aide was unaware that the SENCO had been working with the professional development provider to develop better communication systems for teachers and teacher aides. While the SENCO was planning to "run the plans past" the teacher aide, she had not been included in any discussions. Consequently the teacher aide thought that the school had made no progress towards achieving its action plan from the professional development.

> Meeting times for planning were to be a priority, but nothing has happened. I don't know why, I keep asking. I only get half an hour for lunch and I spend most of that running around trying to catch up with teachers.

This example further highlights the need for effective communication processes within schools and for ensuring that teacher aides are included in the loop when planning systems that they are a part of.

Impact on school practices

Responses ranged from "no impact" to "huge". In one school that identified no change the RTLB confirmed that "teacher aides still work one-to-one with children" and another RTLB noted that in her cluster she had "seen no difference in practice in five schools".

Two schools were able to identify specific improvements such as requiring teacher planning, and providing support for this, written documentation for teacher aide induction, and improvements in communication between teachers and teacher aides.

One school was "thinking about" ways to find time for teachers and teacher aides to plan together but the current workload for the teaching principal appeared to be overwhelming. The RTLB for this school reported that she had been encouraging a teacher to include a student with learning support funding in the classroom, but "in reality the teacher is not interested in inclusion". The RTLB reported that since the contract she had spent considerable time gathering resources and making it possible for the teacher to include this student, and noted with frustration that this material had not been used. "He gets a sheet of maths to do while the class does something else. A comment from the provider about this school was "They didn't seem to understand the programme and did not pick up on any suggestions for development after the staff meeting - didn't seem to understand the changes in special education since SE 2000".

In another school an extremely competent, experienced, and resourceful teacher aide had found another part-time job, and the teacher was very disgruntled at having to work with a new, untrained teacher aide.

> She's into withdrawing an awful lot. Her expectations of what he can do are lower. She'll say, 'He won't be able to do that' or "He doesn't need to do that.' She can't see that sitting on the mat with the others is important for him. I feel she wants to do her own thing, and she does too much for him. I've sat down with her. She needs a lot of direction, I've had to give her direction. I've had to think of a lot of specific activities for ____. There's lots of stuff that I don't even know about because it's at a junior level, whereas the other teacher aide would go out and find the right activities. It feels like having another child in the classroom. She says 'What do we do next? We've finished this'. It's because she has done the work for her. Something that the other kids have taken two days to do and she's done it.

In this school, the principal had taken on the SENCO role, and had not been able to find time to induct the new teacher aide.

One RTLB commented that it was very difficult for schools to implement changes because any new step presented itself as an additional burden.

> They see RTLBs as causing meetings. If you want teachers to assume responsibility for these children then you must give them time. We sit beside them as they are rushing their lunch, we walk beside them as they are doing their duty, and try to make them think on the run.

The familiarisation session

Many of the schools had not had the familiarisation session at the time of the interviews, but those who had done so had found it to be very worthwhile. SENCOs, like teacher aides, found real value in meeting with their counterparts from other schools. In one area RTLBs were not able to attend familiarisation sessions despite making requests to the provider.

The resource

Because few schools had been to the familiarisation sessions at the time of our second visit, most of the 8 schools had not seen the resource. One principal said that "I have read it right through. I thought it was reasonably stating the obvious, but it was a good start". The SENCO in this school has used some of the material in the teacher aide handbook she was developing for the school.

One principal had placed the resource in the staff room with an attached note indicating that it was an NZCER resource, and requesting staff to "have a look at it". The teacher we interviewed at this school had not read it when we talked with him.

When shown a copy of the resource by the interviewer all principals and SENCOs viewed it positively as helpful orientation for new teacher aides, and some schools thought that it would also be useful for new teachers.

Another principal was unable to recall if she had seen the resource.

> That's the trouble. We get inundated with resources, there's the walking school bus, and climate change came this morning, and we still haven't done the ACC Playground safety one. And we've got all that strategic planning and charters to do.

RTLBs said they would also use the resource if requested by schools to work with teacher aides. Some saw a problem with teacher aides funded by ORRS, as they thought RTLBs' role was to work with schools to support the learning of students with moderate needs, and therefore were unable to work with these teacher aides.

Barriers to effective collaboration between teachers and teacher aides and inclusive teaching in primary schools

These barriers to effective collaboration between teachers and teacher aides became apparent in the course of the case studies:

- Attitudinal barriers to having students with special learning needs in classrooms. In some schools there is not the philosophy that all students have the right to learn and to be successful, and there is teacher resistance to including students with special needs in their responsibilities. Some of this resistance could be related to lack of information and support for teachers in their classrooms when a child with special needs is enrolled, and to teachers' lack of confidence in working with these students, or knowledge of collaborative learning approaches.
- Lack of training for SENCOs and/or schools with no SENCOs (or when the principal took on the SENCO role, but could not make time for it).
- Inadequate preparation for teachers in some pre-service education programmes in how to plan for all students in their classroom programmes. Whatever the strengths of pre-service education, all beginning teachers need strong guidance and the collective support of a committed team of teachers.
- Not enough useful information at transition points (e.g. school entry, beginning intermediate school). It was not usual for teachers to meet with parents when a student with special learning needs began in their class, which would make it harder for teachers, teacher aides, and parents/whānau to share knowledge and decide how to work together productively with particular students.

- Funding was seen as inadequate to support students with special needs, particularly for students who were not eligible for ORRS. The ORRS application process required schools to invest many hours in a process that may have a negative outcome in terms of gaining additional resourcing. Some SENCOs said that this time-consuming process took away their time that could have been better spent assisting teachers and students.
- Lack of collaboration between agencies, especially between RTLBs and the old SES. Several RTLBs emphasised that they had been trained in collaborative consultation methods, whereas they believed that the SES model was more of a "deficit/diagnosis model". One reported being "driven bananas" by the unresponsiveness of an SES psychologist to her efforts to collaborate in relation to students' programmes. There was a belief that current GSE staff had "little or no" classroom experience so they were not able to provide schools with the help that they needed. One RTLB stressed that while she wished to work with GSE staff she "would not want there to be a hierarchy". She hoped that things would improve now that GSE was part of the Ministry of Education.

Future professional development needs in primary schools

Staff in primary schools had varied suggestions for professional development, but generally they appeared to think that what was required was the provision of more teacher aides rather than additional professional development. Several teachers suggested that there should be courses on specific disabilities such as ADHD and autistic spectrum disorder so that they would be better able to teach such students.

There was in some schools a sense of "learned helplessness" with regard to students with moderate and high learning needs. Teachers did not appear to have sought out information for themselves in relation to the needs of specific students, nor did they appear to see this as their responsibility. Having said that, it is important if teachers are to meet diverse student needs that they have ready access to useful information and advice, as well as the information they can gain from parents/whānau.

The need for professional development for schools in pedagogical strategies that include all students appears to be indicated. However, such strategies should also be built into all curriculum professional development contracts so that teacher capability and responsibility for catering for all students is continuously strengthened.

Specific training for SENCOs appears to be a priority, so that teachers have ready access to in-school support. One very successful SENCO, who had previously completed the Teaching Students with Special Needs course at his local College of Education, suggested that this course could be offered to a wider group of teachers.

Several people suggested that principals also require more knowledge and expertise in this area, and such training could be incorporated in existing training for new principals.

"Clear", "murky", and "cloudy" schools

The 12 case study schools present an overall picture of widely varying approaches to inclusive education, which was reflected in their approach to the professional development and what they got out of it, and their participation in the research.

We found it helpful to see the schools on a continuum of "clear"(n=2), "cloudy"(n=5), and "murky"(n=5). The 2 schools which we characterised as "clear" in their attitudes and organisation,

were already demonstrating sound inclusive practices. These supportive schools had a shared understanding of their responsibility to cater for the learning of all students, and had developed collaborative processes to ensure that student needs were addressed. These schools were prepared for the NZCER visit, had timetabled the interviews, and staff were informed about the purpose of the interviews.

The 5 "murky" schools were disorganised schools, where there was no shared sense of responsibility for all students, whatever their learning needs, accountability lines were unclear, and responsibility for children with more complex needs tended to be transferred to teacher aides/kaiāwhina. In these schools the interview questions usually had not been distributed to staff beforehand. In 3 schools the teacher aides/kaiāwhina were unaware that they were to attend the professional development.

Schools in between were a little "cloudy" with patches of clarity. These schools were relatively well organised, but had not yet managed to get consistent approaches in their schools. One school had a newly appointed SENCO, and another, a new principal. Both these schools were moving rapidly towards more effective school systems.

Clear schools

"Clear" schools had straightforward policies towards provision for an appropriate education for all students. The school trustees and staff shared the expectation that all students can learn and took collective responsibility for planning, resourcing, and teaching to achieve positive outcomes for all students. As one SENCO told us, "Children come first. We look to see what we can do to improve things for children."

There was someone in the clear schools with a leadership role to support all teachers to teach more effectively. It could be the special needs co-ordinator, deputy principal, or principal. If there was a special needs co-ordinator, they were well supported by senior management and had enough time to do their job.

There were well-defined systems within clear schools to identify where programmes were not supporting learning, to analyse why, and to look for solutions. Teachers would be supported to look at the match between their classroom programmes and the ability of particular learners to participate, rather then attributing a lack of learning to characteristics of students.

Creating time for collective planning was a priority. This had not been easily achieved, and it was usually at the cost of other initiatives. Schools worked out how to create non-contact time for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina in a variety of ways, such as combining classes for short periods, or having the principal taking classes several times a week. In one school the SENCO regularly took teachers' classes so that the teacher aide and teacher could plan together. These schools also used some teacher aide/kaiāwhina hours for planning and evaluation.

These 2 schools responded strategically to the support offered to them by the professional development. If the facilitator they got was responsive to school needs, and could offer the help they needed, they signed on for the in-school component. If they had other more compelling needs in other areas, or if they considered that they were able to address their own needs they did not continue with the professional development.

Murky schools

Schools that we characterised as "murky" appeared to lack clear policies and processes, indicating that special needs were not seen as a priority or taken-for-granted responsibility of senior school management or the board. Teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina in these 5 schools typically reported feeling professionally unsupported and left to solve problems on their own. There appeared to be a lack of tracking and planning for the needs of students. For example, 2 teachers reported finding out that they were to have a student with special learning needs in their class at the end of January even though the student had been enrolled in the school the previous year. Records of the previous progress of the student were not passed on to the teacher. This suggested that class placement was not a considered and thoughtful process. In several instances teacher aides/kaiāwhina said that they had been assigned students with very high needs with no preparation, and very little notice.

Murky schools did not significantly benefit from the professional development because they were not clear what they expected from it. In one of these schools a pair of teacher aides reported to the principal that the first teacher aide workshop was unhelpful, so they decided not to attend the second, and cancelled both workshops for a subsequent pair of teacher aides – without consulting them.

Staff from these schools expected "quick-fix" answers for their problems from their professional development facilitator, and did not appreciate the purpose of careful data collection and analysis before making decisions about students. Solutions to teaching students with special needs were seen as outside their sphere of influence, and the main response was to see a need to increase the numbers of teacher aides/kaiāwhina, rather than work more deeply on roles, communication, and knowledge and skills.

Overall, the more organised schools were alert to how they could improve their current practices, while the murky schools looked to the professional development contract to address issues that were outside its scope. The murky schools were more likely to be disappointed by the outcome of the professional development, and showed fewer changes in school practices.

However, as a result of the professional development, teacher aides/kaiāwhina in the murky schools did become aware that their work would be much more effective were they part of a purposeful team. The next step for these schools would be professional development for senior management, although this may not be acknowledged by the senior management themselves.

Summary

Here we summarise the evidence from the qualitative case studies in relation to the particular research questions for the evaluation which they address. The quantitative data from the school surveys and teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshop forms give us a good idea of the overall prevalence of experiences and impact. This qualitative data provides insight into the extent of the impacts, and the factors that were related. It also provides some understanding as to the factors that affected school staff's experience of the professional development, and their ability to make use of it in their own school setting.

Was there an increase in the knowledge and skills of teacher aides/kaiāwhina?

Where there was new knowledge for individuals covered in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops, the workshops provided an effective vehicle for teacher aides/kaiāwhina to pick up new ideas and ways of thinking about their role. They learnt from each other as well as from the professional development facilitators. Most of the examples of new knowledge which came through the case studies were related to ways of supporting students' positive behaviour and engagement in learning, including stepping-back from doing things for the students in ways which made it harder for the students to learn or experience independence.

Some also gained the knowledge that the Ministry of Education expected teachers rather than teacher aides/kaiāwhina to take responsibility for the programmes of students with special needs, and to work collaboratively with teacher aides/kaiāwhina rather than leaving them to work alone with individual students. Where schools had also used the professional development to improve their systems and practice, this knowledge could be used by the teacher aides/kaiāwhina. But if teachers they worked with did not change their practice, and school systems did not change, the teacher aides/kaiāwhina found it difficult to use the knowledge they had gained.

Was there an increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members?

Some increase in school knowledge and strategies to support teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members was evident in the schools that were open to improving their practice, and prepared to put some resources into ensuring that staff could work together. It seemed helpful to have a senior staff member who had the role of SENCO, and had the status and time to work across the school. It was much harder for the professional development to have an impact on secondary school practices.

How well was this professional development delivered?

The schools' experience of the professional development was variable, and very dependent on the quality of the facilitator, their knowledge of their subject and of how schools work, and their confidence and willingness to respond usefully to the particular issues raised by school staff in both the whole-school workshops and the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops.

There were some examples of miscommunication between providers and school staff about the role of the whole-school session, but school staff expectations may also have played a part in how well they thought the professional development had been delivered.

Did this professional development programme engage its target audience?

The whole-school workshops did not always engage all school staff, particularly in secondary schools, where some of those who most needed to be there (principals and teachers working with teacher aides/kaiāwhina) were not present, indicating a school lack of priority to the subject of this professional development.

For those who did participate, there was particular value in having a session which brought together teachers, management, and teacher aides/kaiāwhina since people were able to learn more about what was occurring outside their own daily rounds; the work of teacher aides/kaiāwhina was recognised and

affirmed; and there was a rare opportunity to discuss how this work was occurring, and how it could be improved. The presence of an outside facilitator was found to be useful, if the facilitator was good.

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops also engaged their audience by offering affirmation, and offering them the rare opportunity to meet and learn from each other. The workshops may have been more effective for less experienced teacher aides/kaiāwhina – who were their target audience – but even more experienced teacher aides/kaiāwhina had often picked up some knowledge or ideas, and gained a wider perspective on their roles. Because the professional development contract covered the payment of teacher aides/kaiāwhina time, the professional development was readily accessible.

The in-school component was the most customised aspect of the professional development, and this in itself was engaging for the school staff who worked with the facilitator.

The print and video resources may have some ongoing effect as sources for induction material for teacher aides/kaiāwhina, but were sometimes lost in the stream of resources coming to schools.

Are there ways to improve this kind of professional development?

This professional development was intended to provide an overview and introductory level material, with some follow-up available, dependent on school interest and judgement about whether they would work with their own systems and support (e.g. RTLB, SENCO), or could see value in working further with the provider. Some of the school staff could see the need for ongoing work, but were not sure how to organise it; others were making more use of their RTLB and SENCO. Questions were raised about whether RTLBs and SENCOs should have been more involved from the start of the professional development, particularly where school staff were ready for more customised and ongoing professional development, including work on changing school systems and roles. But some found that it was useful to have an outside facilitator and professional development to add impetus and weight to their own change initiatives.

Given that the school response to the professional development was dependent on its own existing organisation, culture, and priority given to meeting the needs of students with special needs, there does seem to be value in thinking how to customise professional development more, or else to think of levers which would spur school management into giving such work priority.

While teacher aides/kaiāwhina made some gains in their approaches to working with students, they were less likely to find that the way they worked with teachers had changed. This would indicate that joint teacher-teacher aides/kaiāwhina professional development would be useful, as would professional development for teachers in the context of the Ministry of Education's new emphasis on quality teaching practice for diverse learners (Ministry of Education, statement of intent 2003–2008), within particular curriculum or integrated curriculum areas, rather than as separable "special education" professional development.

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina in these case study schools seemed ready for further professional development. Their interest needs to be picked up and regular workshops offered locally, both in-school and across schools, within teacher aides/kaiāwhina paid work time. The SENCOs in these schools also appreciated the professional development. They play a key role in school systems and support for the role of teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina in working with children with special needs, and should therefore be a priority for ongoing local professional development.

All this would suggest the value of co-ordination of professional development in local areas, in line with the development of the network of learning support, and the emphasis in the Ministry of Education's statement of intent for 2003–08 on building communities of professional practice.

Section Four

The experiences of kaiāwhina in kura kaupapa Māori, and of the Māori facilitators

Introduction

In the design of this evaluation, we envisaged 4 case studies, of one kura in each of the provider areas, along the same lines as the mainstream case studies, with a "before" and "after" design. However, all the providers found that it took longer to involve kura in the professional development programme. The Māori providers and facilitators needed to negotiate separately with each kura, and work out with them the approach that would best meet that kura's needs. Unlike English-medium schools, many kura had not received professional development related to SE 2000, which meant additional time was needed to set the scene for their decision about whether to be involved. Some providers found it difficult to locate facilitators who had relevant experience, and who were available. All this meant that the professional development started later with kura.

It also meant that facilitators coming on board began to question the emphasis on a common resource and associated professional development, and to ask why there had not been a parallel process to develop a resource and methods for kura kaupapa Māori. Some were unaware that there had been separate focus groups with kaiāwhina and kura staff and whānau held to gauge views on kura needs in relation to professional development for working with students with special needs. Māori staff were in the professional development provider teams which developed the printed resource.

The Māori facilitators' concerns were voiced to Pauline Waiti, the NZCER researcher, as she contacted them to set up the protocols for her research and identify kura for the case studies. In order to proceed with the research in one area, she had a meeting with one of the facilitators to discuss these issues. The concerns were discussed again by the whole group at the providers' hui held in early July in Auckland, and voiced to the hui. An additional hui of the Māori facilitators to allow them to share their experiences and ideas was held at NZCER later that month. This hui also made some recommendations about future professional development for kura kaupapa Māori.

The researcher's relationship with the facilitators was extremely important in this process and also enabled the research process to proceed as it did.

Because of the issues around the delivery of the programme, the evaluation methodology for kaiāwhina in kura kaupapa Māori changed slightly to descriptions of the experiences of the kaiāwhina and the programme facilitators in the delivery of the programme, based on broad discussions and some interviews. This section describes the experiences of a sample of 4 kaiāwhina from 3 kura kaupapa Māori in 3 geographical areas, and a focus group of 7 kaiāwhina from 4 kura in the fourth area.

In case one, the researcher held discussions/interviews with the kura principal, the kaiāwhina, and the facilitator. The time of the year in which this development occurred made interviews and meetings difficult to organise for the research and the delivery of the programme.

In case two, the researcher had organised a visit to the kura during an extremely busy time at the end of the year, and airport closures meant the visit could not happen on that particular day. There was not an alternative time that could be made to fit in with the kura because of the timing and so arrangements were made to have discussions/interviews by phone. The discussions/interviews were held with the principal, the Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour, and the Kaiwhakahaere Māori at the local College of Education. A position paper was also received from the Contract Co-ordinator for the region.

In case three the researcher attended the second kaiāwhina workshop, and held a focus group discussion with 7 kaiāwhina from 4 kura who were present. Ongoing discussions with the facilitators occurred.

In case four the researcher visited the kura and had discussions/interviews with the 2 kaiāwhina and the principal, and was present during the first training session with the whole staff. The researcher visited the site at the conclusion of the training and had discussions with the kaiāwhina. Discussions with the facilitator continued throughout the programme.

Case one

The 2 facilitators in this area organised meetings at each kura which had indicated a willingness to become involved in the programme. The intention was that once the kura staff and whānau had met with the facilitators and been informed about the programme, they would decide on their involvement. These meetings involved meeting the principal, staff, and whānau, familiarisation with the contract, programme, and resource, and finding out from the kura staff and whānau what they wanted from the professional development. The facilitators left information that kura staff and whānau could refer to, including a copy of the resource. They felt they had provided a good overview (and detail when necessary) of the programme and information about the scope of the professional development they could offer.

The kura in this case agreed to participate in the programme towards the end of the year and without this prior meeting. One facilitator, who was known to the kura, facilitated the programme here. The kaiāwhina in this kura was only part-time, working at the kura for 2 days a week and had Limited Authority to Teach. He was employed initially as a Kai Arahi i te Reo and as his area of study and interest at university was Pūtaiao (Science in te reo Māori), he took on the role of the Pūtaiao teacher for 6 Year 9 and 10 wharekura students. When the facilitators asked him what he would like to gain from the professional development he said he would like to meet with other kaiāwhina and build up a support network, particularly as it was his first year as a kaiāwhina and he really did not know what his role was.

The principal of the kura is a new, young principal in her second year in the position. When she was asked about the professional development she would like for the kaiāwhina, she said she wanted him to have professional development in the areas of behaviour management, classroom management and planning, and assessment. This request reflects his role in the wharekura as a teacher and the recognition that he needed support, particularly as he was untrained.

The facilitators included the kaiāwhina in a 2-day workshop they were facilitating at another kura that had 3 kaiāwhina. This workshop provided the opportunity for the kaiāwhina to network with the other kaiāwhina present. He found this exciting and valuable, particularly as prior to this he felt isolated, as

there is quite a distance between the kura. They also provided some behaviour management development and some Pāngarau "5–minute activities" that the kaiāwhina could use if they were left on their own with a class, while the kaiako was preparing for the class. They also provided some professional development in the reading programme "Tatari, Tautoko, Tauawhi" (Pause, Prompt, Praise). The kaiāwhina were upskilled in this area and felt empowered by this and asked the facilitators to hold a session with their own kura staff, which they did. The kaiāwhina said he really enjoyed his sessions and came back to the classroom with a number of ideas.

The principal said that the training received by the kaiāwhina was valuable and had made a difference to his management of students in his classes.

The facilitator used the basic content of the professional development, and added the other aspects to it. While they felt it was important for the kaiāwhina, staff, and whānau to know as much as possible about "everything", particularly roles and responsibilities, this was not entirely possible in this kura as it was not possible to hold the first staff/whānau hui. Much of the development occurred in this situation because the facilitator was present at the kura in roles over and above that of facilitating this professional development. The principal commented that the relationship the kura already had with the facilitator was an important part of how the programme worked in this kura despite timing barriers. She could work with the kaiāwhina in context and role model for him. This process used in this situation has worked for this kura and kaiāwhina and the professional relationship between the kaiāwhina and principal continues to grow in a supportive environment.

Case two

The decision about the delivery of the resource in this area was based on consultation between the contractor and a kura principal with whom the contractor had previously developed a close working relationship. The kura principal was concerned that there was not a Māori facilitator to deliver the programme to her kura. The contractor suggested using a model she had used with another group of teacher aides/kaiāwhina. They decided that the kura kaiāwhina would become the selector, deliverer, and recipient of the knowledge rather than merely the recipient.

The contractor and her team agreed to adhere to the following principles to be considered when delivering the resource successfully in Kura Kaupapa Māori. These are:

- delivery style needs to be appropriate and unique for each kura;
- whānau need to be included in decisions such as participation, involvement, time, setting, content, personnel;
- adaptation of the resource should be based on the kura culture and perspectives;
- delivery to be negotiated and choices offered so that, where possible, kura are able to involve their leaders and chosen personnel in the delivery to their kura; and
- from the initial contact, use a model of collaborative consultation with a focus on recognising the knowledge and understanding that Māori bring to teaching and learning, underpinned by the concept ako.

The kura selected the kaiāwhina, who was a parent who helped with the reading programme in the kura. It was important to the kura that this person was familiar with the needs and aspirations of the kura, was fluent in te reo Māori, and did not require relief cover in order to participate in the training.

She was seconded for a week to work alongside the facilitators of the programme to develop a professional package specifically for that kura.

During the week of her secondment she:

- familiarised herself with the programme and the resource;
- observed a first teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshop, and was impressed with Māori philosophy included in the programme;
- observed a whole-school staff meeting;
- spent time researching information in the area of Māori education, and reached the conclusion that there is an "urgent need to acknowledge tangata whenua in the principles and practices in the New Zealand education system"; and
- found the week "busy, stimulating, and confirming of the kura philosophy".

As a result of her one-week secondment, she identified a number of follow-up areas to form the basis of the professional development for the kura. While the kaiāwhina felt she gained a lot of knowledge from her experience, she also felt she was used as a source of knowledge about Māori ways by the people who facilitated her secondment. She said the training offered was from a Pākehā knowledge base and she was having to adapt it to a Māori knowledge base.

The kura principal believed that while the model worked in this instance, better ways of delivering need to be thought out in the future. It is her view that a Māori facilitator delivering in the school on a regular basis would have been more appropriate and would address the needs of the kura in a more substantial way. The model used did address the concerns over appropriate people being in the kura to provide professional development and allowed the power to remain in the kura. The principal felt that all the staff at the kura would benefit from the professional development.

The Māori RTLB commented that this model of delivery was very different to other models used, and it did cater for the kura and their identified needs. However, she expressed concerns over the lack of success in having a Māori facilitator deliver the programme, and the limited involvement of Māori in the development of this model of delivery.

Case three

The delivery in this area was bicultural and bilingual. There were three Māori facilitators in this area who worked together in the delivery of the programme. The kaiāwhina from kura in the area came together for the kaiāwhina workshops. The second workshop had both Māori and non-Māori facilitators, and the delivery was in both English and te reo Māori. One facilitator would deliver a topic, idea, or concept in English and the Māori facilitator would follow this in te reo Māori, and often relate it to Te Aho Matua (the Kura Kaupapa Māori philosophy). This method of delivery was decided on in consultation with the kaiāwhina, their kura (particularly the principal), and the facilitators. It was decided that all the facilitators had particular skills and the kaiāwhina wanted access to all of them. The issue of the language of delivery was not as important here as the issue of increasing understanding and knowledge. This workshop was held over 3 days rather than 2 days and this was beneficial to the kaiāwhina, who commented that it allowed them time to "take on" what they had been doing.

The Māori facilitators in this area already had relationships with a number of the kura and this was a major advantage in getting a large number of kura participating in the development.

The kaiāwhina said they were very excited about their participation in the professional development programme. They said their self-esteem and confidence in their work in kura had improved immensely. They saw a lot of value in the professional development particularly because everyone, including themselves, knew what their role was. The kaiāwhina commented that they have gained skills and knowledge that have allowed them to focus on their role in more meaningful ways. They saw the value of involving the kura principal, staff, and whānau in the initial hui. They also commented that they wanted to continue with the professional development so they could continue to "grow". One of the facilitators has continued to work with 2 kaiāwhina in one of the schools.

This method of delivery was very effective for the kaiāwhina. The collegiality and building of networks were important as was the increased knowledge and understanding they gained from the programme.

Case four

The Māori facilitator approached this kura personally to talk about the programme and their involvement. She was accompanied by a local kuia who had previously worked in SES in this area. The facilitator said it was important that she was guided by this kuia in her relationship with the kura.

There are 2 kaiāwhina who work full-time with one high needs ORRS student at this kura. The kura has a history of including this student in their whānau from the time she entered the contributing kōhanga reo. She was then 11 years old. One of her brothers and a sister also attended the kura. There is now a special purpose-built building on site in which she has her classes, called Te Whare Awhi. This building was supplied by Ministry of Education and OSH and has been on site since the beginning of Term 4 2002, as the regular classroom situation did not provide for her physical safety. The nature of this student's condition is such that a regular programme is difficult to determine and to follow. Depending on the "wellness" of the student sometimes she remains at home and the kaiāwhina go to her house, and sometimes she is at school for half a day and then she goes home and the kaiāwhina go with her. The hours for the kaiāwhina come from the Ministry of Education and Turanga Health.

While the kaiāwhina have the support of the kura and the whānau, they have the total responsibility for this student. Their role is to look after her needs in a holistic fashion, that is, physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. They have activities that they design and develop themselves to stimulate and develop her intellectually and physically. They support her emotionally and spiritually by the way they interact with her on a daily basis.

The principal of the kura was new and had not really begun to understand the impact of the situation he had walked into regarding the relationship between the high needs ORRS student, the kaiāwhina, and the whānau. He was unsure how he should proceed, and welcomed the opportunity to participate in the programme.

A whole–staff meeting was held and the kura made a commitment to participate in the programme as set out in the resource. Before the training the kaiāwhina were very excited about the possibilities for learning more about the role of kaiāwhina and how they could be more effective for their student.

They both attended the first workshop together. However, because they could not get a reliever for the second workshop, one attended, and the facilitator went to the student's home to talk about the content of that workshop with the other kaiāwhina.

The kaiāwhina found the workshops interesting but not particularly relevant to their situation with their student. They saw difficulty in transferring the framework and content of the programme and resource to their situation with their student. They were keen to come away from the training with some skills and understandings that would help their role as kaiāwhina but felt that they did not. Their suggestion was to include their work with their student as a participatory research project that could be used to inform others who are working with similar students.

They enjoyed the networking opportunity, which for them was critical as they felt they have never had opportunities for professional development because of the intense nature of their work with their student. They enjoyed meeting people who are in similar, but not identical, situations to themselves, and having the opportunity to discuss ideas and issues.

The kaiāwhina agreed that the warmth and caring nature of the facilitator plus her willingness to try and meet their needs was important in their participation on the programme.

Issues for the Māori facilitators

At the hui of the Teacher Aide/Kaiāwhina Professional Development Providers held in June 2002 in Auckland, there were a number of issues the Māori facilitators identified that needed to be discussed and worked through at that point in the programme delivery. The Māori facilitators were given the opportunity to meet on their own and to report back to the rest of the meeting. The following issues were reported to the rest of the meeting.

The overwhelming issue was that the Māori facilitators did not feel they were working from a position of partnership in this development. While it was acknowledged that Māori had been involved in the design and development of the programme and the resource, the Māori facilitators, who were not part of the original development teams, felt they could not "see that" in their experience so far.

They felt isolated and disempowered, particularly those who were physically isolated, but also those who were working closely with others. The Māori facilitators suggested that a national hui be held at the beginning of the contract, much like the one they were currently attending, where they could wananga together and share their ideas and thoughts about what they were expected to do. They could share networks and build on the previous experiences of members in the team. Crucially, they could provide support for each other and build on their relationships/ whānaungatanga. They commented that this is important in allowing people to see the "whole picture" and how they fitted into it. A hui at the beginning of the development could be the point at which the "whole picture" is presented, and the facilitators would be easily able to see how they contributed to the whole.

There were issues about tikanga in the process of the professional development that were restricted because of resource availability. It is important that the process of "kanohi ki te kanohi" (face-to-face meetings) occur with kura. Associated with this is tikanga of leaving a koha at the kura. Some facilitators also needed kuia and/or kaumatua to accompany them on their first meeting as often the facilitators were of a different iwi to the tangata whenua of the kura. The facilitators commented that their experience was that they were told there were no funds available to do any of these things on their visits to the kura. Consequently the facilitators felt compromised as Māori. They used their own resources to validate the situations they were in.

The facilitators felt "whakamā" (embarrassed) that the resource was not written in te reo Māori when they went to visit kura. While some kaiāwhina elected to work in parts of the programme in the

English language eventually, the message taken by the kura when the resource was presented in English was that the kura were not realistically considered in the origins of the development of the programme and the resource. This caused concern for the facilitators and was often referred to as a reason why uptake by the kura was not as keen as it could be.

A further issue was the added pressure on the Māori facilitators by having to translate the resource and workshop materials in their own time. While the language of the resource may not have been an issue for some kaiāwhina, philosophically it was important to do this for kaiāwhina working in lura kaupapa Māori.

The facilitators expressed concern about the time taken to begin delivery to kura. Many facilitators were delivering well into Term 4, and running out of time to complete the programme before the end of the contract. Discussions revealed that this was because there was difficulty finding the appropriate people to facilitate and deliver the programmes in kura, particularly in some areas. The facilitators commented that there needed to be a parallel set of Māori contractors to facilitate and deliver to kura, rather than the current situation where all the contractors were non-Māori, some with Māori facilitators, some without them. This would not be the situation if a partnership model had been used in this programme.

It was noted that while the Māori facilitators were having their hui in July, the rest of the facilitators had the opportunity to discuss specific topics directly related to their role as facilitators. The Māori facilitators were given the opportunity to have another meeting that would allow them to discuss the "nuts and bolts" issues. This hui was facilitated and supported by the NZCER researcher. This hui was held later in the month of July. At this hui a series of recommendations were made based on the discussions of the hui held earlier in July. These were:

- that Māori facilitators have a hui at the beginning of the programme;
- that there be equal representation of Māori at all levels of the process;
- that all resources for kura kaupapa Māori be written in te reo Māori; and
- that the evaluation of the programme be carried out from a kaupapa Māori research base.

One of the important statements made by the Māori facilitators at this hui was "*We need to have a parallel partnership with processes and practices that do not compromise our cultural professionalism.*"

The final hui was held in October 2002. Concerns were raised at this hui about the follow-up support for the kaiāwhina and kura the facilitators have been working with, once the contract was completed. The Māori facilitators believed that one of the factors leading to the success of the programme delivery in kura was their ability to build and grow meaningful relationships. They felt it is important to develop the training further to build upon the gains made to date. It is often this relationship building that ensures later entry into the kura for further development.

It should be noted that the effort of all providers and their Māori facilitators to approach kura appropriately, and to tailor the professional development around their needs, resulted in a higher participation rate for kura kaupapa Māori than English-medium schools: 66 percent. The providers' final reports to the Ministry of Education underline the importance of having prior contacts or routes to kura, and of having professional development facilitators who spoke te reo Māori. They also show the high interest in kura kaupapa Māori of professional development for teacher aides to supporting students' development in literacy and numeracy.

The programme was delivered in 4 areas around the country to kaiāwhina in different ways. While the delivery was successful, the issues that arose for the facilitators are important and if not addressed could impact on further professional development within the kura. A partnership model of development and delivery would help ensure these type of issues do not arise in future developments. It is important to build on the relationships and culture of professional development currently developed in kura. The staff/whānau in kura have had their awareness raised and now want to be involved in further professional development around meeting the needs of students with special educational needs.

One of the issues for professional development provision in kura kaupapa Māori is the tension between the desire of kura to build and use their own expertise for professional development, and the availability of people external to the kura in the areas required for development. This needs to be considered and addressed, within the context of developments that have previously occurred in the kura.

Kura that have already participated in professional development programmes are finding that they have developed relationships with external facilitators, have increased their knowledge, skills, and understandings, and are building a culture of further professional development in their kura. These kura are more likely to want to continue with professional development programmes, and look at the option of developing appropriate expertise within their kura to facilitate them.

A kura participating for the first time in a professional development programme will not have this culture and would be relying heavily on appropriate external support and facilitation in their professional development. If this is unsuccessful, the kura is unlikely to continue with professional development programmes. Careful consideration needs to be made about the capacity to fill these roles, as the number of available experts is not large. One suggestion is a core group of qualified experts to facilitate professional development in the kura, with the experts travelling to all the kura to deliver, in the first instance. This should then encourage kura to continue with further professional development and to begin development to provide their own expertise.

Summary

Here we summarise the evidence from the material gathered from kura and the Māori facilitators working with the kura, in relation to the particular research questions for this evaluation.

Was there an increase in the knowledge and skills of kaiāwhina?

In 3 of the 4 case studies the kaiāwhina said they had gain increased knowledge about their role and the role of the teachers. They also said that their confidence in being a kaiāwhina also increased as a result of the training. One kaiāwhina (new in the position) commented that he only really knew what his role as a kaiāwhina should be, as a result of the training.

Was there an increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting kaiāwhina as team members?

Staff and principals in 3 of the 4 kura attended the first hui with the facilitators and said their understanding of the role of the kaiāwhina had also been clarified. The kaiāwhina in the focus group commented on the value of having the kura principal and staff at the initial hui, and also the whānau as

they are often heavily involved in the running of the kura, and so needed to be informed about what the role of kaiāwhina should be.

How well was the professional development programme delivered?

The providers commented that the lateness of notification of the development for kura meant that many kura that had already planned their professional development programme for 2002 did not commit to the development and those that decided they wanted to, were very slow in being able to start, by the time consultation with whānau had occurred. This did mean that while kura kaupapa Māori had a higher participation rate in the professional development, the programme had to be delivered within a short time-frame, with little time for the in-school follow-up.

Barriers

The language of the resource was a barrier for some providers/facilitators because they felt whakamā that a resource to be used in a kura was not in te reo Māori. No additional time was allocated them to translate the workshops into Māori. Some facilitators were concerned that tikanga could not be easily acknowledged within the programme, for example, in cases where they wanted resources to provide for kaumatua to accompany them or to buy food for hui.

The facilitators did find difficulty in feeling part of the programme, because they had joined it after its development, and did not have a clear overview of its development and aims. The lack of Māori facilitators in some areas was an impediment to the provision of the programme to kura kaupapa Māori.

Keys to success for professional development providers

It was essential that the facilitators were Māori, could meet the language needs of the kura, practised appropriate tikanga, and could build a trusting relationship with the whānau and kura based on whanaungatanga. It was helpful if they had provided previous professional development for the kura (not necessarily in the area of working with students with special needs). Non-Māori speakers who had knowledge which kura considered valuable also played a role, within a partnership approach.

Barriers for receipt of programme

There was some suspicion among kura of a resource that was not provided in te reo Māori. Lateness of the notification of the professional development prevented some kura accessing the programme, as did the difficulty of getting relievers, a perennial problem for kura kaupapa Māori.

Keys to success for receipt of programme

The facilitators were persistent, and went out of their way to provide support for the kura, sometimes using their own resources, and to customise the workshops around the needs of individual kura and kaiāwhina.

Did the professional development programme engage its target audience?

With the approach described above, relying on the kanohi ki te kanohi (one-to-one) relationship building that occurred, the professional development did engage kura and kaiāwhina, and it made kura staff and whānau more confident about the value of professional development. The resources provided

through this professional development were therefore used by kura, where other resources they had been sent lay unused.

Suggestions for improvement of this kind of professional development

For kura kaupapa Māori it is important that there is partnership evident from the start of the development of any national programme. This could be done by identifying and setting up a group of Māori expert practitioners who will carry out the professional development for all kura involved, from beginning to end. It is this group of experts who would contribute at all steps and ensure that protocols and processes meet the needs of Māori. This would ensure the best use of the small pool of experts available. All resources for kura kaupapa Māori need to be presented in te reo Māori.

Kura that have already participated in successful professional development programmes are more professional development ready, have a culture of professional development in the kura, and are more likely to want to continue with professional development. The crucial relationships of trust have been established with providers. It is particularly important for kura, given their particular needs to build capacity, that initial professional development programmes such as this lead to further professional development and support. This programme whetted an appetite for professional development for kaiāwhina in supporting students in literacy and numeracy.

Section Five

Provider perspectives

Throughout the duration of the contract the evaluation team had the full co-operation of all providers. We kept in touch with their development and delivery of the contract through face-to-face meetings, emails, phone calls, 4 progress reports from each provider, and final interviews. This gave us a good picture of their issues, challenges, and successes throughout the contract, which we describe here.

Provider reports

Analysis of the provider reports indicated that the following areas created challenges for them, which they addressed in a variety of ways.

Eligibility criteria for teacher aides

The criteria for eligibility for the professional development contract was that teacher aides had to be working for at least 15 hours a week, and to have no teacher aide qualifications. Both of these criteria became problematic in some instances. Small rural schools tended to employ teacher aides for less than 15 hours a week, and some schools divided teacher aide time between 2 teacher aides, particularly when they were working with students with very high needs. Providers were responsive to these difficulties by allowing 2 teacher aides/kaiāwhina to share one registration, and accepting registrations from ineligible teacher aides/kaiāwhina (without funding) where places were available.

The qualification criteria meant that some teacher aides without a formal qualification but who had significant prior learning such as a partially completed qualification, relevant non– qualification courses, and/or several years' experience as a teacher aide attended the course. These teacher aides had knowledge and skills in advance of the introductory level of the course, and some were disappointed because of this. Others were prepared to share their knowledge and experiences for the benefit of less experienced teacher aides, and providers encouraged their contributions.

The requirement to have a full staff meeting at the start of the contract

Some schools were reluctant to devote a full staff meeting to the contract. There were a number of reasons given for this, such as that staff meetings had already been scheduled and advertised, 2 hours at the end of the day was too long for teachers, or the pressure of other professional development contracts. Some schools wanted the professional development for their teacher aides but did not want to involve the rest of the school. In large secondary schools it was felt that the staff meeting would be irrelevant for many staff.

Providers worked with schools to accommodate these concerns, including scheduling the staff meeting later in the contract, shortening it to one or 1½ hours, and by accepting less than full attendance, particularly in secondary schools.

Providers considered that the staff meetings were a productive part of the contract, noting that there appeared to be some attitudinal changes as a consequence of the meeting.

The teacher aide workshops

Some schools were not able to release all their teacher aides at the same time, because it was not possible to find cover for their duties. Providers responded by offering workshop 1 and 2 on alternative dates to stagger attendance and maximise coverage for students.

Providers were very positive about the teacher aide workshops, and their reports show that they went to considerable effort to meet participants' needs, with one provider offering a follow-up series of 3 one-hour sessions on Māori pronunciation. Some providers sought out additional material for teacher aides that was not covered in the workshop. All provided additional material for the participants to take away with them, with helpful ideas, reference to resources, and examples.

The resource

Providers considered that the resource had good content, although the fact that it cannot easily be photocopied, and the typeface was not easily read was disappointing. One provider commented that there was enough content for 3 days professional development, and a decision had to be made to "juggle" and "trim" the content, so that the process was not compromised by efforts to "cover" material. The same provider indicated that it was important to devote time to "burning issues" of participants so that they had some of their major concerns addressed.

Providers were divided in their decisions about the optimal time to hand out the resource to schools. Some handed it out at the whole-school workshop, while others felt that this would be a disincentive to attendance at the familiarisation seminar. Most made the decision to hand it out at the familiarisation seminar. Final reports indicate that some who did this realised there could have been benefits from handing it to schools earlier, and to having the familiarisation session at the start of the professional development programme.

Follow-up visits

Providers worked with schools on a range of school-identified areas. A number of these indicated a need for principals (or SENCOs) to have a greater understanding of how to develop policies and practices for the effective deployment of staff. This work included writing job descriptions, setting up appraisal systems, using the ORRS funding and the SEG grant. Some schools looked for guidance on how to use this funding in useful ways, and how to monitor its use. It also included looking at ways to free up teachers and teacher aides to meet together. Schools also requested help in identifying learning goals from the IEPs, building these into classroom programmes, and measuring student progress. Some schools also wanted guidance in meeting their responsibilities under the current National Administration Guideline 11 iii and iv:

iii on the basis of good quality assessment information, identify students and groups of children:

a. who are not achieving;
b. who are at risk of not achieving;
c. who have special needs; and identify aspects of the curriculum which require particular attention;

iv develop and implement teaching and learning strategies to address the needs of students and aspects of the curriculum identified in iii above;

From their work in schools 2 providers noted that teacher aides need more knowledge and protection when they care for students with physical disabilities. It was seen as very important that teacher aides are properly inducted in this area, both for their own protection and their students' safety.

Another concern that was noted by providers was the need for many schools to have more help with behaviour management.

An issue that was noted by providers in reports and at meetings was the need for clearer guidelines about the use of the Limited Authority to Teach (LAT) category. They reported that ERO was requiring teacher aides to have LATs, and that some secondary schools were allowing LATS to have full responsibility for the teaching of students in units.

The providers' reports highlighted the need for schools to have ongoing expertise available to them, both from within and outside the school so that they were able to cater effectively for students with special learning needs. They identified a need for all of the people who worked to assist teachers to teach students with special needs to work purposefully together, and to set collective goals and targets for their community.

Familiarisation sessions

These went well, and attracted schools which had not taken part in the professional development programme, some of whom thought that the professional development programme would be offered on a continual basis, i.e. that they could pick it up when it suited their school, in 2004.

Follow-up interviews with providers

Representatives from all providers were interviewed towards the conclusion of the contract – in late November-early December. The interview questions were sent in advance to each provider. Where one representative was a spokesperson for their group they had discussed their views with members of the team prior to the interview. All were interviewed face-to-face with the exception of the South Island provider. The purpose of the interviews was to identify provider views of how well the contract had gone, the components which went well/less well, any modifications to the resource or delivery, factors influencing delivery, the impact of the contract on teacher aides and schools, and their suggestions for improvement of any future professional development in special education.

Staffing

All providers reported that they took care in employing staff who had credibility with schools, understood the SE 2000 philosophy, and whom they believed would be able to work effectively with adults. Staff included ex teachers with backgrounds in special education, speech language therapists,

special education advisers, and trained RTLBs not currently working in schools. Time was spent in training the presenters, and in team building. Providers found it difficult to recruit people with the skills they were seeking, as potentially appropriate people who had worked on Special Education 2000 contracts had found other employment. At the conclusion of the teacher aide contract 3 of the providers' leaders themselves had to find other positions. This does raise the issue of how to sustain expertise in special education, and the difficulty of doing so on the basis of time-limited competitive contracts.

Components of the professional development

Providers' views varied about the success of different components of the contract.

Staff meetings

Where providers had been able to convince principals of the importance of including all staff at the whole–staff meeting (one provider estimated that this took up to 30 minutes per school), the staff turnout was better and the meeting more productive. All providers felt that the staff meeting heightened the awareness of the respective roles of teachers and teachers' aides, and raised awareness of issues relating to how teacher aides and teachers communicated. Two of the providers had felt some anxiety about holding meetings with large groups of unfamiliar staff, but were pleased at the level at which staff participated, and their willingness to engage in problem solving. Overall, providers felt that the intended key messages were heard and accepted by staff. They noted that in many schools teachers came to the staff meetings with little information about teacher aides, and became more informed as a result of the meeting.

Individual facilitators varied in the degree to which they "pushed" for full attendance in secondary schools. Some insisted on full attendance and as a result they had to manage extremely large meetings. Others targeted the teacher aides, the teachers with whom they worked, and key management staff. All providers noted that some secondary schools were focused on student performance in external examinations, and thus the teaching of students with special needs was not given a high priority. This limited the commitment of some schools to the staff meeting.

Teacher aide workshops

All providers were very positive about this component. They enjoyed working with the teacher aides, and felt that the opportunity for teacher aides to network was a strength of the workshops. One provider considered that the prospect of professional development held at a tertiary institution was initially daunting for teacher aides from a low decile area. "Do we have to sit a test?" they asked. Two of the providers described the workshops as empowering for teacher aides, particularly in lower decile areas. There was recognition by one provider that some teacher aides with unrealistic expectations of what could be learnt in 2 days may have been less satisfied with the workshops.

The in-school component

One provider considered that the in-school component might have been the least successful component of the contract. She felt that this was because they did not have information about the specific areas that staff wished to work on because the sheets had been forwarded to NZCER before they had been photocopied. She considered that it would have been more effective if a meeting had been held with SENCOs first, to alert them to the professional development and to create more commitment to it.

Another team felt that "we didn't get a lot of requests because we had dealt with the issues in the staff meeting," or because "they felt empowered to take up their own follow-up".

Two providers found that the in-school sessions gave them the opportunity to address specific school needs, and believed they were the most valuable part of the contract.

The familiarisation session

Providers approached these differently, too. One provider encouraged principals and deputy principals to attend, another emphasised that it was for SENCOS, and a third invited "anyone who wanted to come". The provider who opened the sessions up to all comers did so partly because of low take-up. In her view this occurred because the sessions had to be held late in the year because of the late start of the contract.

There appear to be strengths in each approach. Where the familiarisation was limited to SENCOs it provided an opportunity for SENCOs to meet together for the first time, and to develop a sense of collective purpose. Other approaches broadened the number of people who were familiar with the resource.

All approached the familiarisation in a similar manner with creative activities that required participants to examine the resource carefully. They reported that this was extremely effective. "We couldn't believe how much they liked the resource. They raved about it." Several participants told them that if the resource had been simply sent to the school, they would not have looked at it.

Delivery of the resource to non-participating schools

Providers reported that schools were generally surprised and appreciative that the resources were delivered in person. In some schools providers said that seeing the resource aroused interest in participating in other courses with a special education focus. The positive response to the resource may suggest that the placement of the overview of the resource at the beginning of the contract rather than at the end, might have improved the uptake of the professional development, though this also depended on what professional development schools had already committed themselves to.

Links with other agencies

Although it was not specified as part of the delivery, one provider introduced the resource to local school support advisers, and showed it to GSE staff in 3 districts. Two providers offered seminars to groups of RTLBs. They reported that it was warmly received by RTLBs who made photocopies of it for future reference, but would have liked their own copies. Another provider was aware of this approach but considered this was not expected in the contract.

Providers' views of impact of the professional development

Impact on school systems

Providers considered that the staff meetings provided the initial impetus for change, and in some cases judged that it had a significant impact on schools' willingness to look at their own systems. One provider attributed this to the fact that the schools' own "data collection" (the collation of their assessment of their current practice) was used as the focus of problem solving. One provider identified

impacts on induction and appraisal processes, timetabling to allow teachers and teacher aides to meet, and reorganisation of physical space so that there was better room for teacher aides to work with students.

Others agreed that there had been improvements in systems, with some schools becoming more aware of the responsibilities of the SENCO. One provider thought that in some secondary schools SENCOs have taken too much responsibility for the programmes of students with special learning needs, and that classroom teachers have not been given the opportunity to learn how to work with these students. She believes that some secondary schools will rethink the roles of SENCOs.

She also indicated that schools have indicated that they intend to budget some teacher aide time for planning and communication, now that they realise that "No-one is going to growl if they don't have the child with the teacher aide every minute of the day."

Providers gave some examples of greater inclusion of teacher aides in the life of the school. One school included teacher aides in staff photographs for the first time, while another provider noted an increase in the amount of informal contact between teachers and teachers' aides.

Most providers believed that teacher aides had developed in confidence as a result of the contract. They felt affirmed and valued by the professional development, and had the beginnings of professional networks.

They were unable to assess any impact on teachers and one provider felt that this could have been expected because teacher aides had their professional development in isolation from teachers. She said that in some schools teachers and teacher aides worked together during the in-school component which was very helpful. There was agreement that teachers need further support, resources, inclusive teaching strategies, advice on curriculum adaptation, and on going training if positive outcomes are to be achieved for students with special learning needs.

Differential impact in schools

Providers identified several school factors that enhanced the impact of the professional development. The most critical factor was the degree of support from school leadership. Characteristics such as "attitude", "leadership", and "preparedness to change" and "commitment" were identified. Schools with leaders who communicated and reinforced a climate where all students were entitled to a good education were more responsive to the contract. One provider considered that schools that had participated in SE 2000 were able to "get up to speed" more quickly. The quality of the persons delivering the professional development was also identified as crucial. In one case the provider became aware that a facilitator lacked the knowledge and skills to work effectively with teachers, and subsequently worked alongside her.

Factors that worked against the effective delivery of the contract

Providers identified a number of factors that made it more difficult for them to deliver the professional development contract. All identified the following:

- Ineffective or unsupportive school leadership.
- Some principals made decisions not to participate in the contract, without input from other staff, such as the SENCO.

- PPTA strike action.
- The time-frame. All saw it as too rushed or "too tough".
- The eligibility criteria. The requirement for teacher aides to be employed for 15 hours a week penalised small schools, or schools that spread time across several teacher aides. Even though the criteria changed during the course of the contract, they felt that it was too late for some teacher aides who would have benefited to be included.
- The fact that there is "so much out there". Schools have a wide choice of professional development and providers felt that other initiatives which had been more strongly promoted by the Ministry were perceived to be more important.
- Competing teacher aide courses offered at the same time by RTLBs and GSE staff.
- Lack of a national long-term professional development plan that would allow schools to plan ahead strategically. "One-off" courses tended to be overlooked, disregarded, or undertaken at an unsuitable time for schools because they were aware that if they did not participate, they would lose their chance.
- Lack of a unified voice from the Ministry of Education and ERO regarding special education. Providers gave the example of conflicting messages about the need for teacher aides to have LATs as an area that still has not been resolved.

Modifications to the resource

All providers developed additional resources to support the resource. They were disappointed in the presentation of the resource, and the fact that the print was small and hard to read, and not able to be photocopied (a point they had stressed in the development phase). Ideas and materials were readily shared among the providers. Providers reported using Ministry of Education information booklets, as well as personally prepared and commercial materials. There was some attempt to tailor the teacher aide workshops to meet particular needs, but this was difficult as there was core material to be addressed, and the needs and experience of participants varied widely. All providers prepared booklets for the teacher aides to take away with them, and included some extra reference material.

Views on future use of the resource

Providers considered that the strength of the resource was that it could be used in a variety of ways. Possibilities were:

- as a starter for school-based professional development;
- selected parts to be used to address particular needs;
- for SENCO to use;
- parent meetings;
- induction of new teacher aides and teachers; and
- as a resource for RTLBs to use.

Involvement of RTLBs

Providers were asked about the degree of involvement they had with RTLBs throughout the contract. This varied. One provider was aware that this group wished to be involved in the contract. She said that some RTLBs attended the phase one staff meetings if the schools invited them, and if there was a space in the familiarisation session they could attend. Another provider described their contact as

"extensive in all regions" with RTLBs invited to staff meetings, and being made familiar with the resource.

A third provider held the view that it was not the role of the RTLB to offer teacher aide training. This provider believed that it was a school responsibility to induct and train their teacher aides, and RTLBs could allow schools to avoid this task. However, this provider was aware that another provider was holding familiarisation sessions with RTLBs and requested clarification from the Ministry of Education, but this was not resolved.

Provider views of ways to build on this initiative

Providers all believed that training and support for the teaching of students with special learning needs should be ongoing and part of a co-ordinated vision. They stressed that unless there are national expectations for schools to meet the needs of all of their students, schools may consider that they have "done special education" without any resulting improvements in outcomes.

They also highlighted the need for a trained person in every school to assist staff to provide appropriate educational programmes for all students. They pointed out that many SENCOs had been appointed to their positions when they had no specific background or skills to allow them to understand their roles. This tended to increase the "pull out' philosophy to meeting student needs as it created the illusion that the schools were "doing something" to assist students to learn.

Two groups suggested a change from the term "Special Education Needs Co-ordinator" to "Learning Support Co-ordinator" as the latter implies that support is available to all students and does not label a group of students as "different" from others.

Providers were concerned about the non-compulsory nature of school participation in contracts such as this one, which aim to improve the education of students with special needs. They talked about "principal gate keeping". Some schools, which would have benefited from the contract, chose not to participate, and providers felt that there was little accountability in this area.

Provider lessons from this contract

Providers all learnt that teacher aides are a very diverse population with some very skilled, creative, talented, and dedicated individuals. They felt that some brought very different and useful skills to schools that were not always recognised. As a group, they were seen as pragmatists, people who were impatient with "jargon", and who had a passion to do well by the students they felt responsible for. They believed that teacher aides worked primarily for the intrinsic satisfaction of the job, but that they deserved better conditions and remuneration for the vital role they play in schools.

Providers also felt that the collaborative nature of the contract enhanced the quality of the content and delivery, and helped develop strong networks. They recommended that future professional development contracts build on these networks.

Summary

Here we return to the main research questions for this evaluation, and summarise the information presented in this chapter in relation to the questions about the delivery of the professional development programme, and suggestions for improvement.

How well was the professional development programme delivered?

The providers were aware of 3 essential contributors to the quality of the professional development programme they delivered: the facilitators' knowledge, relationship-management, and presentation skills; the timing of approaches to schools and the time schools would give to the professional development; and customising as much as possible to the needs identified by schools and teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Barriers for professional development providers

The providers identified some barriers to their being able to provide the quality of professional development they wanted:

- The lateness of schools being told about the professional development.
- The difficulty in building up and keeping teams of good facilitators if the providers could not offer guaranteed hours at definite times, and only limited hours in some areas. They found difficulty in recruiting and retaining experienced, quality people in all areas. They had particular difficulty with finding, developing, and retaining Māori facilitators who could work in te reo Māori with kura kaupapa Māori.
- The criteria for teacher aides/kaiāwhina eligibility were probably too narrow, as they rested on the number of hours they were employed each week and their formal qualifications. This took some administrative time to sort out. Some teacher aides/kaiāwhina who had considerable experience were eligible, but found the workshops at too introductory a level (though as we saw in the case study section, some of these teacher aides/kaiāwhina did in fact learn some new approaches).

Keys to success for professional development providers

The professional development programme went well if teams were well-organised, and already had considerable knowledge about special education and schools. The training and support provided to facilitators was important, though this did not by itself guarantee quality. The providers' leaders worked particularly hard to ensure that the professional development programmes were taken up. They also added to what was provided nationally, and tried to customise where they could. They learnt from one another through resource development, regular contact, and sharing of what worked and what did not. The bicultural team in the Auckland area was particularly successful.

Barriers for receipt of programme

- The comparatively late announcement of the professional development was a saving since many schools had already organised their professional development for 2002 the year before.
- Schools felt overloaded with existing professional development commitments.
- Secondary schools were under pressure from strike action and the implementation of new qualifications.
- Providers had difficulty making contact with schools where the contact person was involved in full-time classroom teaching.
- Alternative professional development for teacher aides/kaiāwhina was already provided by others – including GSE and RTLBs.
- The inability of SENCOs (special education needs co-ordinators) working in large schools to gain the support of senior management.
- The reluctance of some schools to undertake professional development in the field of special education.

- School difficulty in accessing relief teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

The teacher aides/kaiawhina workshops had to be pitched to a wide range of experience, and had more to offer less experienced than experienced teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Keys to success for receipt of programme

The professional development providers were persistent, including calling in on some hard to contact schools to talk through what they were offering. They customised as much as possible in terms of times to suit schools, the time and form of the whole-school workshop, the content of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops, and for kura kaupapa Māori. The reputation of the professional development providers was also important, and it helped that some were known to schools through previous Ministry of Education professional development contracts.

The providers also found that school attitudes towards special education provision, and how well the schools were organised, also had an impact on the take-up and receipt of the professional development.

They thought it important for the programme's take-up that it provided funding for employment of relievers, and for travel.

Suggestions for improvement for this kind of professional development

The providers recommended that printed resources have an easily read typeface, and a layout that will allow them to be photocopied. In hindsight, they thought that the familiarisation sessions should be held earlier in the year, so that some follow-up could be provided. Personal delivery of the print and video resources to schools was more likely to gain school interest and use.

There are issues arising about the need to provide sustainable employment for providers and facilitators, to ensure that quality teams can be provided. The networking developed through this collaborative contract had been valuable.

The providers saw the need to now target professional development to teachers in terms of their role in teaching children with special needs.

Section Six

Stakeholder perspectives

We interviewed a range of stakeholders to ascertain their views about the teacher aide contract, how they had heard about it, the degree to which they were involved, and their suggestions for future development. We interviewed representatives from both teacher unions (NZEI and PPTA); IHC (1); RTLBs National Association (2); the Ministry of Education (2); and the New Zealand Principals Federation (NZPF). Numerous attempts were made to contact the Secondary Principals Association (SPANZ), but these were unsuccessful. All interviews with the exception of the NZPF were held face-to-face.

The majority of views were held in common by the stakeholders and these are discussed in the following sections, with any differences in positions noted.

The need for the professional development contract

There was overall agreement that since teacher aides are used increasingly in schools there needed to be greater clarity about their roles, and their relationships and responsibilities within the schools. The contract was seen as an important signal that their roles are important and that they have a place in the overall range of supports to teachers in classrooms. A Ministry of Education spokesperson also noted that a related goal was to build capability among providers and foster collaboration between them.

The content of the professional development contract

All interviewees supported the messages in the professional development contract, in particular its emphasis on the role of the teacher aide as a support to the teacher, not as a replacement for the teacher. The intended emphasis on whole-school participation and shared responsibility for all students was supported. The IHC representative commented that her organisation frequently receives complaints from parents referring to situations where the teacher aide has been used to replace the classroom teacher. She expressed concern that *"In some situations, when a teacher aide is assigned to a student the teacher abdicates responsibility for even interacting with the student."* Her organisation was aware that in some schools, the teacher aides became the major educators for some students with special needs, with too many demands placed upon them. She, and others, were pleased that the contract did not focus just on teacher aides, but required the school to look critically at the ways it met the needs of students with special needs.

Several interviewees believed that the workshops could have been targeted at teachers and teacher aides. One interviewee pointed out that *"Teacher aides do not have the mandate to change school systems."*

The low take-up of the professional development contract

The Ministry of Education had expected that a greater number of schools would participate in the contract. There were a number of possible reasons for the relatively low take-up suggested by stakeholders. These included: insufficient publicity early enough; the need for teacher aides to have been directly contacted ("teacher aides don't read the Gazette"); competition from other contracts; school concerns about the possible quality of the contract; the credibility of the providers; other school priorities such as NCEA in secondary schools; provider delays in getting staffing in place; the low priority accorded to special needs in schools; and the resistance to the requirement to have a whole–staff meeting.

Several stakeholders were concerned at the low priority that many schools placed on students with special needs, which may have meant that they resisted involvement in the contract. Some schools view these students as extra burdens for already overworked teachers.

Three people interviewed noted that schools were finding it very difficult to cope with an increasing numbers of students with behavioural difficulties. One commented that these students "can drive a teacher to the point of despair - when they are like that you wish to God that there was a special school so you could bung them in". This could suggest that when schools are already struggling with a range of problems they may resist participation in a professional development programme related to their problem, when what they perceive they need is for someone to take the problem away from them.

It was also suggested by the NZPF and the RTLBs that a reason for the low take-up could have been because schools preferred to work with people they already knew and trusted, and who could offer ongoing assistance. In most cases these people were the RTLBs who worked with the school.

Initial consultation

While NZEI considered that it had been fully consulted from the outset of the contract, PPTA did not feel it had been involved. (Teacher aides are represented by NZEI.) IHC would have liked to have been consulted because its representative considered that the organisation had a perspective that could have been helpful. RTLBs were not consulted because a Ministry of Education search of organisations offering courses for teacher aides in New Zealand did not identify them. (There are 12 providers listed as currently offering teacher aide training in New Zealand.) It was also the view of the Ministry that teacher aide training was not the responsibility of the RTLB service. The RTLB representatives indicated that many schools did ask them to work with their teacher aides, and they showed our interviewer a copy of a comprehensive teacher aide handbook currently used in schools. They said that if they had been consulted they would have encouraged schools to participate in the contract.

The NZPF principal considered that more principals should have been consulted about the professional development earlier in the process because they were more aware about the professional development needed by teacher aides than the teacher aides themselves. Referring to the focus groups she said: "They should have asked the schools: what do you think teacher aides need? What kind of help do you want them to give you? Instead they asked teacher aides who got political/industrial."

Feedback from schools

NZEI and an RTLB representative were the only stakeholders to have had any feedback from schools. NZEI said: "People like the package. We've had nothing but positive feedback. Teacher aides enjoyed the experience." NZEI thought it was too early to assess the impact of the professional development on durable changes in practice. The NZPF principal reported that her school was the only one in her area to take up the contract so she had not heard how schools were finding the contract. One of the RTLBs we interviewed had contacted the SENCOs of 8 schools in her cluster in preparation for our meeting. One school had participated in the first 2 phases of the contract, and the other had attended the familiarisation session. The other SENCOs had not been aware of the contract. The first SENCO reported that as a result of the contract the school had realised the need for job descriptions for teacher aides, and the second said that the familiarisation session had been "really valuable". As a result of her investigation one of the SENCOS called her and asked if she would run a course for teacher aides early in the new year. This informal survey appears to indicate that more schools would have been interested in participating in the contract if staff members other than the principal had seen the publicity material.

Network of learning support centres

Three interviewees considered that teacher aides should be employed by the new learning support centres rather than by schools. This was seen as ensuring that they were paid fairly, had continuity of employment, and would be part of a team with the responsibility to help schools. They would have greater access themselves to a professional learning environment.

Need for ongoing follow up and support

Most of those interviewed viewed this contract as a helpful beginning to effective deployment of teacher aides in schools. Several people noted that schools need local and ongoing support and believed that the new learning support centres could provide this. They saw this as working best in the context of clear national policies and strategies delivered locally. It was thought that any further professional development contracts could be targeted first at SENCOs and/or teachers.

Summary

On the whole, the stakeholders were positive about the intention of the professional development programme, and those who had had some feedback from others thought it had been useful, particularly for teacher aides/kaiāwhina. They were aware of some of the barriers to engagement in the programme which were described in the previous chapters.

The stakeholder interviews provide some useful pointers to what could be done to improve professional development programmes like this one, particularly in relation to working with existing networks, such as the RTLBs and SENCOs, to ensure better take-up, and greater involvement of teachers and school management.

Section Seven

Conclusion

Here we provide an overall set of "answers" to the evaluation's research questions, drawing from the different kinds of evidence presented in this report.

Was there an increase in the knowledge and skills of teacher aides/kaiāwhina?

The teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops did result in an increase in their knowledge and skills, particularly in relation to an understanding of their role. Around 40–50 percent of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina who participated in the workshops said they had gained a lot on at least a third of the topics covered in their workshops. The topics with the most participants recording a lot of gain from their workshops were: roles and responsibilities; maintaining confidentiality; individual education plans; strategies to support learning; fostering friendships; effective communication; and behaviour.

Gains were highest in terms of understanding a topic (average of 40 percent for all topics), with similar averages for confidence and strategies learnt (35 and 33 percent respectively). Gains in knowledge and skills were most likely for those who had identified a need for a given topic – but they also occurred for those who had not seen a topic as necessary or relevant to them at the start of the workshop.

Most of the examples of new knowledge which came through the case studies were related to ways of supporting students' positive behaviour and engagement in learning, including stepping back from doing things for the students in ways which made it harder for the students to learn or to experience independence.

Some also gained the knowledge that the Ministry of Education expected teachers rather than teacher aides/kaiāwhina to take responsibility for the programmes of students with special needs, and to work collaboratively with teacher aides/kaiāwhina rather than leaving them to work alone with individual students. Where schools had also used the professional development to improve their systems and practice, this knowledge could be used by the teacher aides/kaiāwhina. But if teachers they worked with did not change their practice, and school systems did not change, the teacher aides/kaiāwhina found it difficult to use the knowledge they had gained.

Was there an increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members?

The school surveys show some increase in school knowledge and strategies for supporting teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members, with between 10–17 percent indicating some progress in terms of teachers and teacher aides meeting regularly and working together, and 22 percent indicating improvements in their employment conditions, and appraisal to give them feedback on their work. About a third of the school respondents said their school did not change their practice because staff felt things were already working well.

Some increase in school knowledge and strategies to support teacher aides/kaiāwhina as team members was evident in the case study schools that were open to improving their practice, and prepared to put some resources into ensuring that staff could work together.

How well was this professional development delivered?

The case study schools' experience of the professional development was variable, and very dependent on the quality of the facilitator, their knowledge of their subject and of how schools work, and their confidence and willingness to respond usefully to the particular issues raised by school staff in both the whole-school workshops and the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops.

Providers were also aware of the importance of the knowledge and quality of the facilitators delivering the professional development, and because of the difficulties in finding such people nationwide at similar times, were aware of variable quality, even though they provided training and support.

Did this professional development programme engage its target audience?

Thirty-one percent of New Zealand schools took part in the introductory whole-school staff workshops. This was a lower proportion than expected. Likely reasons include: existing school professional development commitments, given that this programme was announced when many schools had already decided on their professional development programme for 2002; some schools were already engaged in professional development about the role of teacher aides/kaiāwhina with other providers; some schools thought the professional development would be offered in subsequent years; and the continuing reluctance of schools or school management to give special education priority in their professional development.

Two thousand, five hundred and sixty five teacher aides/kaiāwhina took part in the workshops – probably around a third of all teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

There was a lower than expected take-up rate for the follow-up in-school support which was offered, perhaps because many of the priority areas identified for further work in the initial whole-school workshops were areas which the schools could activate themselves. However, respondents from schools which had taken part in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops and the in-school support sessions were more likely to report that the professional development had had a large, positive impact in their school.

Evidence from the case studies and providers indicates that the whole-school workshops did not always engage all school staff, particularly in secondary schools, where some of those who most needed to be there (principals and teachers working with teacher aides/kaiāwhina) were not present, indicating a school lack of priority to the subject of this professional development. However, those who did attend found value in the workshops, particularly in bringing people together who did not have time in their daily rounds to share their experiences and ideas for how their work together for students with special needs could be improved.

The providers reported greater interest in the print and video resources where they delivered them personally to schools and kura kaupapa Māori; they noted that the print resource was however not

reader or copier-friendly. Some schools reported intentions to use these for the induction of new teacher aides/kaiāwhina.

Were there any differences in engagement and impact?

There was a higher take-up rate of the introductory staff workshops in secondary, special, small town, low decile, and large schools. This is consistent with the ACNielsen survey data from 2001, which showed that more teacher aides/kaiāwhina were employed in these schools. From the providers' reflections and the case study material, it would seem that schools which did not give priority to meeting the needs of students with special needs were less likely to engage in the professional development, as were schools where material about the professional development did not reach staff who were most keen to have the professional development.

School interest in meeting the needs of students with special needs was also a large factor in the impact of the professional development; the clarity of school organisation and systems (itself a focus of the professional development), was another. There were no school features (e.g. size or type) that were related to the perceived impact of the professional development.

Teacher aides/kaiāwhina who were highly experienced were less likely to get as much out of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops as others, but even here there were some descriptions of changes in approach and understanding. It was difficult for teacher aides/kaiāwhina who did gain a deeper understanding of their role in working with teachers, and of teachers having prime responsibility for student programmes, when they returned to schools where they were expected to continue to take that responsibility themselves, with what they could see was insufficient support.

School representatives whose schools had taken part in the teacher aides/kaiāwhina workshops and follow-up work were more likely to report that the professional development had had a large impact on their school practice.

Are there ways to improve this kind of professional development?

Each of the components of this professional development had some value; schools that participated in all of them probably gained most. The whole-school workshops, while not always engaging all who needed to be engaged if schools were to develop or change their practice, did allow the identification of needs, and an affirmation that the teacher aides/kaiāwhina were part of a team, and that a team approach and systems were needed. We cannot tell from this evaluation whether this participation did sow seeds which were later able to be taken up by school staff, particularly SENCOs and principals, and RTLBs.

One theme which was identified in the different parts of this evaluation was that local expertise and knowledge could have been used and built on. The programme has left many teacher aides/kaiāwhina with a desire for more professional development, and this could be offered locally if there was some co-ordination.

Another is that it is important to customise a national programme where possible, so that it engages school staff, and leads them to see how they can make changes in their own particular contexts. There was flexibility in this programme to do so. However, either a longer lead-in time to develop resources,

or the use of specialist expertise in the making of videos is necessary in offering a national programme, to avoid the very late notification of this programme, which led to a lower take-up rate than planned or desirable.

The quality of the professional development was generally high, but school staff were disappointed in some facilitators. The providers did experience some issues in recruiting and retaining their teams. The experience of the professional development programme has raised issues about the development and retention of expertise and skills, particularly in relation to work with kura kaupapa Māori. There are some ongoing questions about the sustainability of expertise in special education professional development, if it is dependent on periodic contracts.

This professional development succeeded in showing the roles and responsibilities of teachers, to the extent that school staff queried why they had not also been targeted by the programme.

The weight of schools' existing beliefs about how best to work with students with special needs, and their willingness to give this work priority, was a strong factor in both engagement and impact. This suggests that it is important to include working with students with special needs in all curriculum areas, e.g. literacy, numeracy, science, the arts, so that this knowledge can reach school managers and teachers who would not otherwise take part. It would also make sense to include teacher aides/kaiāwhina in curriculum-related professional development. This would reinforce their role, and give them further knowledge and skills.

Appendix A: NZCER Introductory Staff Workshop Form

Introductory Professional Development for Teacher Aides/Kaiāwhina working with children with Special Educational Needs

2b

NZCER Introductory Staff Workshop Form

School Name: _____ **Location:** _____ **Name of person Completing form:** _____ **Position in school:** _____ **Date of Workshop:** _____

Role of Teacher-aides in our school (please write in numbers or tick the appropriate box if your school did not do the activity)	**What our data tells us we are doing well**	**What we want to develop further**
a) The teacher aide/kaiāwhina is actively involved in IEP meetings and other meetings between team members (i.e. parents, whānau, teacher aide/kaiāwhina, students) Yes ❒ Planned For ❒ Developing ❒ No ❒ Don't know/uncertain ❒		
b) There is a written plan for teachers and teacher-aides to use for supporting learning and to provide feedback Yes ❒ Planned For ❒ Developing ❒ No ❒ Don't know/uncertain ❒		
c) Opportunities are provided for teachers and teacher-aide to plan and evaluate together Yes ❒ Planned For ❒ Developing ❒ No ❒ Don't know/uncertain ❒		
d) The teacher-aide is invited to attend staff meetings Yes ❒ Planned For ❒ Developing ❒ No ❒ Don't know/uncertain ❒		
e) The teacher-aide is included in systems which provide information about students and school activities Yes ❒ Planned For ❒ Developing ❒ No ❒ Don't know/uncertain ❒		
f) There is an integrated system in place comprising job descriptions, appraisal and professional development for the teacher-aide. Yes ❒ Planned For ❒ Developing ❒ No ❒ Don't know/uncertain ❒		

Please fax within a week of the workshop to: New Zealand Council for Educational Research Fax: (04) 384 7933, Attention: Marie Cameron.

or send to: New Zealand Council for Educational Research P O Box 3237, Freepost 3214, Wellington

Thank you for completing this form

Appendix B: NZCER Follow-up Survey

KIA TŪANGATA AI SUPPORTING LEARNING

Introductory Professional Development for Teacher Aides/Kaiawhina working with children with special education needs

NZCER Follow-up Survey

School Name:_____ Town / City:_____

Your Name :_____ Your Position in school:_____

Date:_____

A. Which phases of the Teacher Aide Professional Development did your school participate in? **(Please tick one)**

Whole school workshop	Teacher Aide Workshop	In-school support	Familiarisation with resource (SENCO)
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

B. Role of Teacher Aide in your school **(Please tick the box that best describes your school)**

a) Teacher Aides are actively involved in IEP meetings and other meetings between team members

Yes	Planned for/developing	No	Don't know/uncertain
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

b) There is a written plan for teachers and teacher-aides to use for supporting learning and to provide feedback

Yes	Planned for/developing	No	Don't know/uncertain
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

c) Opportunities are provided for teachers and teacher-aides to plan and evaluate together

Yes	Planned for/developing	No	Don't know/uncertain
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

d) The teacher-aide is invited to attend staff meetings

Yes	Planned for/developing	No	Don't know/uncertain
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

e) The teacher-aide is included in systems which provide information about students and school activities

Yes	Planned for/developing	No	Don't know/uncertain
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

f) There is an integrated system in place comprising job descriptions, appraisal and professional development for the teacher-aide

Yes	Planned for/developing	No	Don't know/uncertain
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐

C. Comments on the Professional Development Programme **(Please tick one)**

1. Overall, how would you judge this programme's impact on how well teacher aides and teachers work together to assist the learning of students with special education needs in your school?

	Negative impact		*No impact*		*Small, positive*		*Large, positive impact*
1	☐	2	☐	3	☐	4	☐

2. Please indicate the contribution made by specific components of the programme:
(Please tick one for each component)

	1. Did not receive	2. Negative Contribution	3. No Contribution	4. Small, positive Contribution	5. Large, positive Contribution
Whole staff workshop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teacher Aide Workshop(s)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In-school support	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Familiarisation seminar (SENCO seminar)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comments:

_____ 1 2 3
_____
_____ 4 5 6
_____

3. How would you rate the usefulness of Kia Tūtangata Ai Supporting Learning and the professional development workshops for these aspects of your school? (Please circle the most appropriate answer that best fits your school for each aspect)

		Not at all useful		Some use		Extremely useful
a.	special education policy/s	1	2	3	4	5
b.	school-wide procedures for how teacher aides work	1	2	3	4	5
c.	the inclusion of teacher aides in IEP meetings	1	2	3	4	5
d.	the inclusion of teacher aides in team meetings	1	2	3	4	5
e.	the inclusion of teacher aides in planning and evaluation meetings	1	2	3	4	5
f.	the inclusion of teacher aides in staff meetings	1	2	3	4	5
g.	the provision of job descriptions for teacher aides	1	2	3	4	5
h.	performance agreements	1	2	3	4	5
i.	performance appraisal	1	2	3	5	5
j.	teachers' perceptions of the role of teacher aides	1	2	3	4	5
k.	the inclusion of teacher aides in all school activities	1	2	3	4	5
l.	the provision of professional development for teacher aides	1	2	3	4	5
m.	the development of curriculum plans	1	2	3	4	5
n.	the adaptation of teaching plans	1	2	3	4	5

4. What changes have you made as a result of this programme?

_____
_____
_____ 1 2 3
_____
_____

4 5 6

D. Teacher aides in your school

1. Has Kia Tūtangata Ai Supporting Learning changed the way the teacher aides in your school work? (Please tick the appropriate box)

Yes

☐ If Yes, how?_ _____
_____ 1 2 3
_____
_____

4 5 6

No

☐ If No, why_____
_____ 1 2 3
_____
_____

4 5 6

E. Future professional development

1. Which of the Teacher Aide Professional Development resources have you received?

	Yes	No
a) The video	☐	☐

If yes, how could the video be improved?

_____ 1 2 3
_____
_____

4 5 6

	Yes	No
b) The printed resource	☐	☐

If yes, how could the printed resource be improved? 1 2 3

_____
_____
_____ 4 5 6

2. Which Kia Tūtangata Ai Supporting Learning resources have you used?

		Yes	No
a.	The video	☐	☐
b.	Information on roles and responsibilities of teacher aides/kaiawhina who Work within schools	☐	☐
c.	Roles and responsibilities of special education teams who support Teachers of students with special education needs	☐	☐
d.	Materials to support whole school approach to clarifying roles, teamwork And problem solving	☐	☐
e.	Processes, strategies and resources for teacher aides/kaiawhina	☐	☐
f.	Reference materials	☐	☐

3. What type of professional development would you like in the future to support the school's work with students with special education needs? (Please tick all that apply)

- ☐ a. advice over a period of time on a particular school initiative / emphasis
- ☐ b. one-off seminar on a particular aspect of special education
- ☐ c. access to information on a web site
- ☐ d. videos showing good practice
- ☐ e. videos discussing ideas
- ☐ f. CD-Roms with relevant material
- ☐ g. access to discussion groups on the internet
- ☐ h. local discussion / support groups
- ☐ i. RTLB works with teacher
- ☐ j. RTLB works with teacher aide
- ☐ k. other (please describe) _____

_____

_____

4. What aspects of special education do you think your school would most like to cover in professional development now?

_____

_____ 1 2 3

Thank you very much for completing this form. Your responses will contribute to a full picture of this professional development, and help shape future professional development. 4 5 6

Please fax to: New Zealand Council for Educational Research
Fax: (04) 384 7933
Attention: Linda Sinclair

or send to: New Zealand Council for Educational Research
P O Box 3237
Freepost 3214
Wellington (in the envelope provided)

Please return promptly
by 20 November

Appendix C: Needs Analysis for Teacher Aides

TEACHER AIDES PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2002

Needs Analysis for Teacher Aides

School: _____ **Date:** _____

Teacher Aide:

Please tick relevant box or boxes to indicate year level of students you are currently working with:

Primary			Intermediate	Kura Kaupapa Māori	Secondary
Junior	Middle	Senior			

	BEFORE THE WORKSHOP(S)			AFTER THE WORKSHOP(S)								
	Please put a tick in the column that best describes your need for professional development in each of the following topics:			*Please indicate the gains you have made in each area as a result of the workshop* ***1 = No Gain, 2 = Some, 3 = A Lot***								
TOPICS	**Need**	**Would be helpful**	**Not necessary or relevant**	**Confidence**			**Understanding**			**Strategies**		
Roles and Responsibilities												
Maintaining Confidentiality												
Special Education												
Education Agencies and their Responsibilities												
Treaty of Waitangi 1840												
Legislation												
School Charters												
Special Education Policy												
Individual Education Programme (IEP)												
Recording Skills												
Strategies to Support Learning												
Fostering Friendships												
Partnerships with Parents, Caregivers, Families and Whānau												
Te Ao Māori												
Working with Pacific Students												
Professionals you may Work With												
Effective Communication												
Behaviour												

Personal goals to be set after the workshop: Circle / highlight two topics that you intend to develop in confidence, understanding and strategies by October 2002

Appendix D: Pre-professional Development Interviews

Teacher Aide/Kaiāwhina Interview

Before the programme

1. How long have you been employed in this position? What led you to apply for this?
2. How many hours are you employed a week?
3. How many teachers do you work with?
4. How many students do you work with?
5. I would like to get a picture of the students you work with. Can you tell me a little about them and how you see your role? How is that different from the teacher's role?
6. Have you had any experience or professional development, which has helped you to work with these students?
7. What are your views about the inclusion of these children?
8. What are the main components of your work with students with special learning needs? What would a typical day look like? (*Ascertain whether the teacher aide works with individuals. Groups, inside or outside the classroom?)*
9. Do you have a job description, which makes it clear to you and to others what your role is? Are there any problems with the job description? I.e. does it reflect what you actually do? What you want to do?
10. What is the process for deciding how you will work with students? (Is it specified as part of an IEP meeting for example?)
11. Do you attend these meetings? (If not what are the barriers that prevent this?)
12. When do you usually get together with the teachers to plan, monitor and evaluate student progress?
13. How do you know what exactly it is that you will do in assisting a teacher to help a student learn?
14. How is student progress kept track of? What is you role in this?
15. How do you get feedback on how well you are doing your job? Is there a formal supervision programme? Are you part of the appraisal processes used in the school? How does that work for you?
16. Are you able to attend school staff meetings? Are there any barriers to this happening?
17. What are the things that work really well for you in your role?
18. What are the things that could be improved?
19. How do you feel about the professional development opportunity that will be offered to teacher aides/kaiāwhina? What do you think will work well, less well?
20. What are you hoping to get out of it?
21. Do you have any other comments to make about the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in schools?

SENCO questions (pre programme)

Before the programme

As you know the Ministry of Education is funding an introductory professional development programme to improve the knowledge of teacher aides/kaiāwhina and the ways that schools work with teacher aides/kaiāwhina. We are interested in talking with you because you have responsibility for students with special learning needs in this school, and will have a good view on how the school caters for the social and learning needs of its students. You will be able to comment after the programme on any changes that you notice.

1. Can you tell me a little about your role as SENCO in this school?
2. Do you have a specific job description for this role?
3. Have you had any professional development to help you with this role?
4. Do you have a time allowance? If so how much, and how do you use this time?
5. What outside support do you have for this role? How is this working?
6. What are the main ways that this school meets the learning needs of its students?
    - Is there a shared view that all students can learn?
    - How do you see the school's views on inclusion?
    - How do teachers cater for a range of learning needs in their classes?
7. What do you think this school does well overall in catering for students with special learning needs? Do all children have appropriate educational programmes?
8. Do all students have access to extra-curricular activities?
9. How do you think the school should improve? What would enable you to be more effective in your role?
10. I am interested in how teacher aides work in this school.
    - How are decisions made about the use of teacher aide time? How is their work co-ordinated?
    - How is their role viewed?
    - Do they attend staff meetings? Do they have access to information that is handed out to staff? Do they have a personal pigeonhole?
    - What is your role with regard to teacher aides?
    - What are the ways in which teacher aides work in this school? Do you feel that this is the best use of their time?
    - Who supervises their work?
11. What would you expect teacher aides to be able to do as a result of this contract?
12. What would you hope to result from this contract in this school?
13. Do you have any concerns about the programme? (E.g. Length, structure, nature, expectations).
14. What do you think of the content of the resource?
15. Do you anticipate using the resource on an ongoing basis?
16. Do you have any other comments to make about the roles of teacher aides?

Principal (Primary and Secondary)

Before the programme

1. Why are you interested in participating in this Professional Development contract?

   Probes

   - What do you expect to get out of it? (What kind of knowledge and skills would you like to see as outcomes of this contract?)
   - What do you think will work well with the contract, and what do you think will work less well?

2. To help me get a picture of how you teach children with special learning needs in your school it would be helpful if you could set the scene by telling me a little bit about these students.

   Follow-up probes

   - How does the system work in your school? For example is there anyone who takes responsibility for looking after this area? Does this person have a management unit or extra time to allow them to co-ordinate with others? Is there a school team that provides collegial support to teachers? Who is part of this team? How does it operate in practice?
   - Do you have a policy statement on your approach to students with special learning needs? (If so would it be possible for me to have a copy?)
   - Are there any issues for you in terms of the inclusion of these students?
   - What external supports do you use?
   - What do you think the school does well overall in meeting the learning needs of these students?
   - How do you think that the school could improve?

3. How are teacher aides/kaiāwhina who work with students with special learning needs currently utilised in this school?

   - Are their roles specified in a job description? (If so would it be possible for me to have a copy?) What skills are required to do this job effectively?
   - What does their work in the school in relation to children with special learning needs predominantly involve?
     - In class support? How?
     - Working with individuals or groups?
   - If so how is their work spelled out? (Who plans what they will do?)
   - What processes are there for teachers and teacher aides/kaiāwhina to get together to talk about plans and co-ordinate their efforts? For example how is the teacher aide involved in the writing of the IEP?
     - How are teacher aides/kaiāwhina supervised?
     - Are they part of the performance management system? How often are they formally appraised? Who has this responsibility?
     - Have they had any other professional development? (What was it?) Was it paid?
     - Are they encouraged to attend staff meetings? Do they attend? Are there any barriers to their attending?

4. How are your teacher aides/kaiāwhina currently funded? Does the funding source influence their use? Are there any issues related to this?

5. What advantages do you see in employing teacher aides/kaiāwhina?
6. What skills do you think teachers need to work effectively with teacher aides/kaiāwhina?
7. Do you have any other comments to make about the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in schools?
8. Have you participated in any other professional development in Special education? Has this been helpful to your school? In what ways has it helped?

Teacher Interview Primary

Before the programme

As you know the Ministry of Education is funding an introductory professional development programme to improve the knowledge of teacher aides/kaiāwhina and the ways that schools work with teacher aides/kaiāwhina. We are interested on talking with you because you currently have a teacher aide who works with you to improve the learning of a student or students with special needs.

1. Could we start by your telling me a little about your class? (Level, composition special characteristics etc…)
2. Can you tell me about the children who have been identified as having special learning needs?
   - Can you give me an example of how you currently cater for the learning needs of a student with special needs?
   - What systems are in place in your school to give you collegial support?
3. What are your views about the inclusion of these students?
4. What professional development have you had to help you teach children with special needs more effectively? Has this helped? How?
5. What do you think the school does well overall in meeting the learning needs of these students?
6. How do you think that the school could improve?
7. You currently work with a teacher aide. I am interested in finding out how you manage your different roles, and how you mange to co-ordinate your work together.
   - How would you describe each of your roles in relation to children with special learning needs?
   - What are the skills you think that teacher aides/kaiāwhina need to do their job more effectively.
   - In working out programmes for children how does this operate in practice? Who is involved in deciding what needs to be taught? (Note: are parents involved?) How is the plan put into effect?
   - How does the teacher aide work predominantly? (1 to1, small groups, inside the classroom, outside the classroom..) If outside the classroom how is the work linked back into classroom programmes?
   - How is the work of the teacher aide supervised?
   - How is students' progress monitored?
   - When are you able to meet to discuss the teacher aides/kaiāwhina work and children's progress?
   - What are the advantages you have found in working with a teacher aide?
   - Are there any drawbacks? What are they? How could they be addressed?
8. What knowledge, in your view should teacher aide/kaiāwhina gain from their course?
   - What would you hope to result from this programme in this school?
9. What do you know about the programme? (e.g. length, structure, nature, expectations).
   - What do you think will work well/less well?
10. Do you have any other comments to make about the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in schools?

Teacher Interview Secondary

Before the programme

As you know the Ministry of Education is funding an introductory professional development programme to improve the knowledge of teacher aides/kaiāwhina and the ways that schools work with teacher aides/kaiāwhina. We are interested on talking with you because you currently have a teacher aide who works with you to improve the learning of a student or students with special needs.

1. Can you tell me about the student(s)who have been identified as having special learning needs in a class that you teach. What are the challenges you face as a teacher in catering for these needs?

   What in-school support is available to you?
   How has that assisted you?
   What external supports have been available to you?
2. What experience, professional development or training have you had to help you teach students with special needs more effectively?
3. Are there any issues for you in terms of the inclusion of these students?
4. What do you think the school does well overall in meeting the learning needs of these students?
5. How do you think that the school could improve?
6. You currently work with a teacher aide. I am interested in finding out how you manage your different roles, and how you co-ordinate your work together.
   - How would you describe each of your roles in relation to students with special learning needs?
   - In working out programmes for students how does this operate in practice? Who is involved in deciding what needs to be taught? (Note: are parents and students involved?) How is the plan put into effect?
   - How does the teacher aide work predominantly? (1 to1, small groups, inside the classroom, outside the classroom..) If outside the classroom how is the work linked back into classroom programmes?
   - How is the work of the teacher aide supervised?
   - How is students' progress monitored?
   - When are you able to meet to discuss the teacher aides/kaiāwhina' work and students' progress?
   - What are the advantages you have found in working with a teacher aide?
   - Are there any drawbacks? What are they? How could they be addressed?
7. What opportunities were there for you to co-ordinate your work with other subject teachers in this context? i.e. vis a vis the teacher aides/kaiāwhina?
8. What would you hope to result from this programme in this school?
9. What do you think will work well about the contract and what do you think will work less well?
10. Do you have any other comments to make about the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in schools?

RTLB interview (pre programme)

Before the programme

As you know the Ministry of Education is funding an introductory professional development programme to improve the knowledge of teacher aides/kaiāwhina and the ways that schools work with teacher aides/kaiāwhina. We are interested on talking with you because you work with this school as a resource teacher for learning and behaviour.

You will bring an external view on how the school currently works with its teacher aides/kaiāwhina, and you will be able to comment on any impact that the professional development may have.

1. Could you please tell me a little about your role as RTLB in this school?
2. Can you tell me the main ways that the school addresses the learning needs of students with special learning needs? (e.g. collaborative support teams, use of external supports).
3. How do you see the school's approach to inclusion? (in theory and in practice).
4. What do you think the school does well overall in meeting the learning needs of these students?
5. How do you think that the school could improve?
6. I am interested in how teacher aides/kaiāwhina work in this school.
   - Are you aware of how decisions are made about the use of teacher aide time?
   - In working out programmes for children are you aware of how this operates in practice?
     Who is involved in deciding what needs to be taught? (E.g.: are parents involved?) How is the plan put into effect?
   - Do you have any role in this?
   - How do teacher aides/kaiāwhina tend to work predominantly? (1 to1, small groups, inside the classroom, outside the classroom..) If outside the classroom how is the work linked back into classroom programmes?
   - Do teacher aides/kaiāwhina attend staff meetings so that they are aware of general school issues? Do they have access to information that is handed out to other staff? (For example do they have a pigeonhole or similar ways of getting information, as do other staff?)
   - How is students' progress monitored?
   - How is time found for teams to meet to plan the teacher aides/kaiāwhina work, discuss children's progress, and meet with you?
   - What are the strengths you have found in how this school uses teacher aide time?
   - Are there any drawbacks? What are they? How could they be addressed?
7. What would you expect teacher aides/kaiāwhina to be able to do as a result of this professional development?
8. What would you hope to result from this programme in this school?
9. Do you have any concerns about the programme? (e.g. length, structure, nature, expectations)
10. What do you think of the content of the resource?
11. How do you anticipate using the resource on an ongoing basis?

Do you have any other comments to make about the roles of teacher aides/kaiāwhina in schools?

Appendix E: Post Professional Development Interview Questions

Principal Interview Follow-Up Interview

1. What are your overall thoughts about this contact?

2. What do you think were the strengths of this approach to professional development for your school? What aspects worked particularly well? Which aspects could be improved in future?

3. Can you identify any things the school does differently as a result of this contract?

   Probes

   - Any changes in school organisation or systems in relation to teacher aides/kaiawhina?
   - Any changes in relation to the role or work of teacher aides/kaiawhina or to any way they work together?
   - Any changes in provision or programmes for students with special learning needs?

4. Your professional development provider has given the school a copy of the resource used in the contract (the green and brown kitset called Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning). Have you used this resource in any way up till now? If so what aspects of it have you found to be helpful?

5. Do you have any plans to use this resource in the future?

   How do you anticipate using it?

6. What challenges or needs does the school still have in relation to special needs provision? What would help you to meet these challenges?

7. What kinds of information and support would you find helpful in the future to build on this professional development?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Teacher Follow-Up Interview

1. What are your overall impressions about the professional development contract as it was delivered in your school?

2. Did you attend the staff meeting which involved staff viewing and discussion of a video about teacher aides and teachers working together in school?

3. If you did attend, can you comment about the usefulness of this staff meeting?

4. As you will be aware, the teacher aide that you work with attended a two day introductory professional development workshop. I am interested if, as a result of the workshop, there has been any impact on her work with you and/or students.

5. Have there been any changes in the knowledge and skills of the teacher aide/kaiawhina you work with as a result of this contract?
   - Can you describe these changes?

6. Can you identify any things the school has done differently as a result of this contract?
   - e.g. Any changes in school organisation or systems?
   - Any changes in relation to the role or work of teacher aides/kaiawhina?

7. Your professional development provider has left a copy of the resource used in the contract (the green and brown kitset called Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning). Are you aware that this is in the school?

8. If you have seen this resource have you used this resource in any way up till now? If so what aspects of it have you found to be helpful?

9. Do you have any plans to use this resource in the future?

   How do you anticipate using it?

10. What challenges or needs do you still have in relation to teaching students with special needs? What would help you to meet these challenges?

11. What kinds of information and support would you find helpful in the future to facilitate the inclusion of students with special learning needs into your classroom?

12. Any other comments that you would like to make?

Teacher Aide/Kaiāwhina Follow-Up Interviews

1. What are your overall impressions about the professional development contract?

2. Did you attend the staff meeting where a video was shown about the work of teacher aides in mainstream classes?

3. What are your impressions of that meeting?

4. Were any areas identified as goals for the school to address in working with teachers and teachers aides in their work with students with special learning needs? If so what were these goals?

5. How would you describe the teacher aides workshops?

6. What aspects of it were the most worthwhile for you personally?
   - for your work in the school?

7. As a result of the contract can you identify any changes that have happened in –
   - your employment conditions?
   - the way you and staff work together?
   - your inclusion in the school?
   - the way you work with students?(are you doing anything differently now as a result of the contract?)
8. If you have been doing anything different in class has this had any impact on your student?
   - If there has been an impact please can you describe this?

9. Your professional development provider has left a copy of the resource used in the contract (the green and brown kitset called Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning). Have you used this resource in any way up till now?

10. If so what aspects of it have you found to be helpful?

11. Do you have any plans to use this resource in the future?

12. How do you anticipate using it?

13. What challenges or needs do you still have in relation to your role as a teacher aide/kaiawhina? What would help you to meet these challenges?

14. If you had the opportunity for further professional development, what are your immediate learning needs?
   - What would be the best ways for you to learn this?

15. Is there anything you would like to add in relation to your work?

RTLB Follow-Up Interview

1. What are your overall impressions about this professional development contract?

2. I am interested in learning your views of the staff meeting. If you attended this meeting could you indicate:
   - Who attended this meeting?
   - What was the response of participants to the meeting?
   - What issues (if any) was identified as ones the school wanted to address?

3. If you did not attend the staff meeting what was the reason for this?

4. Which aspects of the contract appeared to you to work particularly well?

5. Which aspects could be improved in future?

6. Have there been any changes that you have noticed in the way the school works with teacher aides/kaiāwhina to support teachers' work?
   - Can you outline these please?

7. Are you aware of any changes in the knowledge and skill of the teacher aides/kaiāwhina in this school? Can you describe these please?

8. Your professional development provider has left a copy of the resource used in the contract (the green and brown kitset called Kia Tūtangata Ai/Supporting Learning) in the school. Have you used this resource in any way up till now? If so what aspects of it have you found to be helpful?

9. Do you have any plans to use this resource in the future?
   - How do you anticipate using it?

10. What challenges or needs do you think that this school still has in addressing the needs of students with special learning needs in mainstream classes? What do you think would help the school to meet these needs?

11. What kinds of information and support do you think would be helpful in the future to build on this professional development?

12. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Appendix F: Follow-up interviews with providers and stakeholders

Providers Interview

1. Could you please tell me about the special education backgrounds of the people delivering this contract (eg psychologists, advisors, ex- RTLBs……..)

2. Do you feel that any particular background experience was particularly suited to the effective delivery of this contract?

3. What impact will the completion of this contract have on the employment of members of your team?

4. The contract had several components. I'd like to hear your general views on the delivery of each component.
   - the staff meeting
   - the teacher aide workshops
   - the in-school components
   - the familiarisation session with SENCOs

5. Do you feel that any component was more successful than others? In what way?

6. Which component was less successful than others? In what way?

7. What impact do you think the professional development contract has had in your area on
   - school systems?
   - teachers who work with teacher aides?
   - teacher aides themselves?
   - your links with external specialists (eg Ministry of Education Special Education staff, RTLB's)?

8. In some schools the professional development has been more effective than in others. What do you think are the factors that have resulted in better take-up and engagement?

9. Are there any factors that have worked against the professional developemtn being as effective as it could be?
   - If "yes" please describe

10. Did the resource "work" the way it was intended to?

    - Did you make any modifications? Why?
    - What additional resources did you use? Why?
    - Were you able to customise teacher aide sessions to meet their particular needs?
    - If 'yes' how did you do this?

11. Now that the resource is in schools, how would you like to see it used in the future?

12. How much involvement did you have with RTLB's throughout this contract?
    - Can you see a role for them in the future in relation to ongoing training and support of teacher aides?

13. In order to improve student social and academic outcomes in schools, where do you think the next focus should be in professional development or support for schools?

14. What have you learnt by doing this professional development contract?

15. Is there anything you would have changed in hindsight?
    - your delivery of the contract?
    - the nature of the contract?

16. What was the most difficult part of the contract to provide? What made it difficult?

17. What is your overall assessment of this professional development contract?

18. Is there anything that you would like to add?

Stakeholder interview

1. What are your views on the ways that teacher aides are generally used in schools in your sector to support teachers to support the learning of students with special learning needs?

2. What do you know about the recent Ministry of Education professional development contract for teacher aides who assist teachers to teach students with special learning needs?
   - What outcomes do you think are intended from this contract?

3. What was your input into the development of this professional development?
   - Were you able to make suggestions about the process, content or delivery of the contract?
   - If so, what suggestions did you make?
   - Have these been reflected in the contract?

4. What have you heard about the contract since it began?
   - from schools/ colleagues/ teacher aides?
   - anyone else?

5. Do you consider that this contract is likely to impact positively on the ways that schools and teachers work with teacher aides to support learning?
   - What impact would you like to see
     - on schools?
     - on teachers?
     - on teachers aides?
     - on students with special needs?
     - on ways in which schools work with families

6. What barriers do you see that work against the inclusion of students with special learning needs in classrooms?

7. What do you consider would reduce these barriers?

8. What would you like to see happen next to improve meaningful inclusion of students with special learning needs in classrooms?

9. Is there anything else you would like to add?