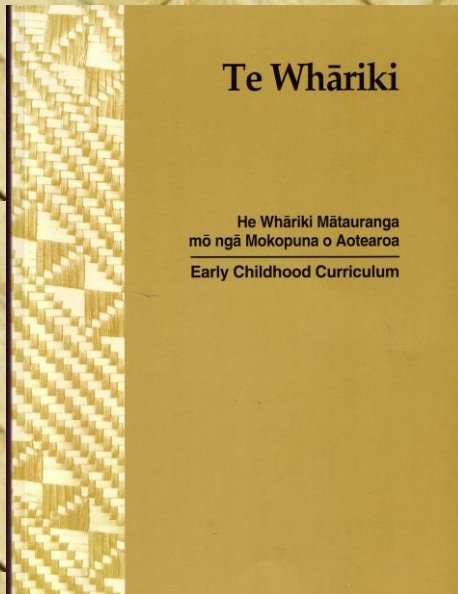


The New Zealand 'Journey': Lessons from Te Whāriki 1993-2013



Helen May
University of Otago, New Zealand

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and
Early Childhood Ireland

Invitational Seminar: *Aistear in Action: Pathways to Quality*

Lessons learned in NZ

- Debating, defining, and realising a vision for young children is complex and a long term process
- Working with the early childhood sector – resourcing the sector, challenging the sector
- Reconsidering the value and role of ECE teachers
- Making connections with and separation from school curriculum
- Engaging internationally
- Building the infrastructure takes decades not years -- strategic planning
- Achieving political investment and being attune to shifting political concern
- Maintaining policy interest and commitment: long term and short term
- Mix of political courage to enforce standards and professional independence and regulation

‘Te Whāriki has been analysed, admired, praised, criticized, deconstructed and debunked, but it has not been a dead document lying on a shelf.’

Anne Smith, (2010) ‘Relationships with peoples, places and things: Te Whāriki’ (Eds.) L. Miller and L. Pound *Theories and approaches to learning in the Early Years*

Pamela Oberhuemer, 'International Perspectives on Early Childhood Curricula'

International Journal of Early Education, Vol.37, No.1, 2005

Six reasons for global ECE curriculum development and implementation

- Education and the global economy
- Research on brain development
- Public accountability amid decentralised policies
- Shared understandings amidst diverse communities and populations
- In countries with poorly resourced ECE mandatory guidelines are seen as quality improvement and an equity measure
- Provide ECE professionals with a common framework for communication around learning between staff and with parents

Alignments but also tensions across political and pedagogical interests

Issues concerning curriculum implementation

Level of qualification of ECE staff

Level and kind of professional judgment

Prescriptive or aspirational?

Standardised vs diversity?

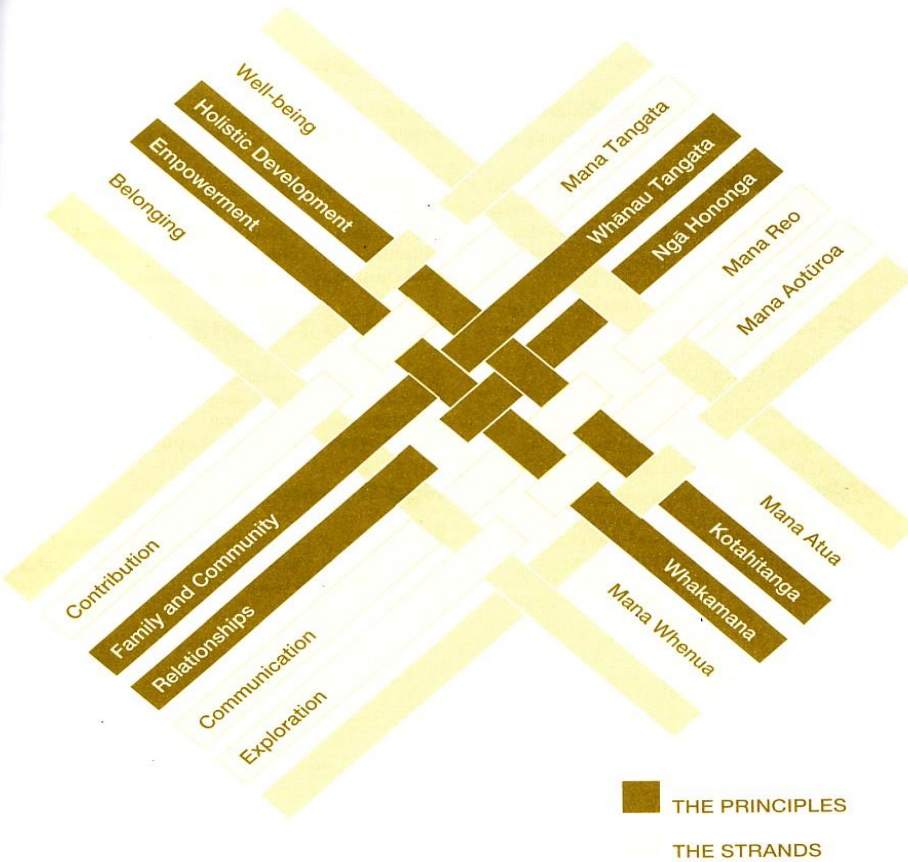
Links with school

Resources to support implementation

Regulation, accountability, evaluation and assessment

Who owns ECE and funds the infrastructure?

Powerful metaphors concerning the process



Te Whāriki: A mat for all to stand on with many possible patterns



Aistear: Life long journey with many possible routes

New language of learning:

Socio-cultural constructivist understandings

Te Whāriki positions children as active participants in their own learning, capable of developing their own ‘working theories about themselves, people and places in their lives’ (MOE, 1996, p.4)

Anne Smith (2010, p.153-4) says:

Children are valued as active learners who choose, plan, and challenge. This stimulates a climate of reciprocity, ‘listening’ to children (even if they cannot speak), observing how their feelings, curiosity, interest, and knowledge are engaged in their early childhood environments, and encouraging them to make a contribution to their own learning.

Te Whāriki focuses on motivational aspects of learning rather than fragmented skills and knowledge. It encourages teachers to support children’s ongoing learning dispositions.

A vision for NZ children

The purpose of ECE is seen as allowing children to fully express these capabilities

To grow up as competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body, and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to the world

(*Te Whāriki* Ministry of Education, 1996, p. 9).

Challenge to teachers: Issues for implementation

- The work of the teacher is less clearly defined.
- Resists telling teachers what to do by ‘inviting’ each programme to ‘weave’ its own curriculum pattern [*and for Aistear – to chart the ‘journey’*]
- Invites debate and reflection
- Premised on theoretical frameworks that focus on children’s learning and development rather than the activities or subject content
- Assumes teachers will possess sophisticated levels of cultural knowledge and theoretical understandings

Development and ongoing implementation of Te Whāriki

1991-1992	Curriculum development
1993	Draft of 'Te Whāriki' sent to centres and trialled
1994 ->	Professional development for teachers.
1994->	Incorporation in teacher education qualifications
1996	'Te Whāriki' launched by the Prime Minister
1996- ongoing	Education Review Office <i>National Reports</i>
1996 -2001	Assessment and evaluation research: 'Learning and teaching stories
1998	<i>A Quality Journey</i> for planning and evaluation
2000 -3	'Te Whāriki video series launched
2001->	Assessment Exemplars Project
2002 -2010	Phasing in for 100% of staff to be qualified teachers
2002	Pay Parity for kindergarten and school teachers
2002-2012	<i>Pathways to the Future</i> . 10 year strategic Plan for ECE
2003-9 '	Centres of Innovation' research partnerships with teachers
2004 -9	'Kei Tua o te Pae -Assessment for Learning' launched
2005	Quality funding linked to the qualifications of staff and levels of pay
2005	Pay parity phase in for teachers in childcare centres (incomplete)
2007	20 hours 'Free Early childhood' policy for 3 and 4 year olds
2009	Policy focus on participation of 'vulnerable children'
2010	Budget cuts, 100% qualification target and funding cut to 80%
2011	ECE taskforce report <i>An Amazing Agenda for Children</i> (2011) recommendation to review the implementation of <i>Te Whāriki</i>
2012-2014	<i>ECE Outcomes</i> project



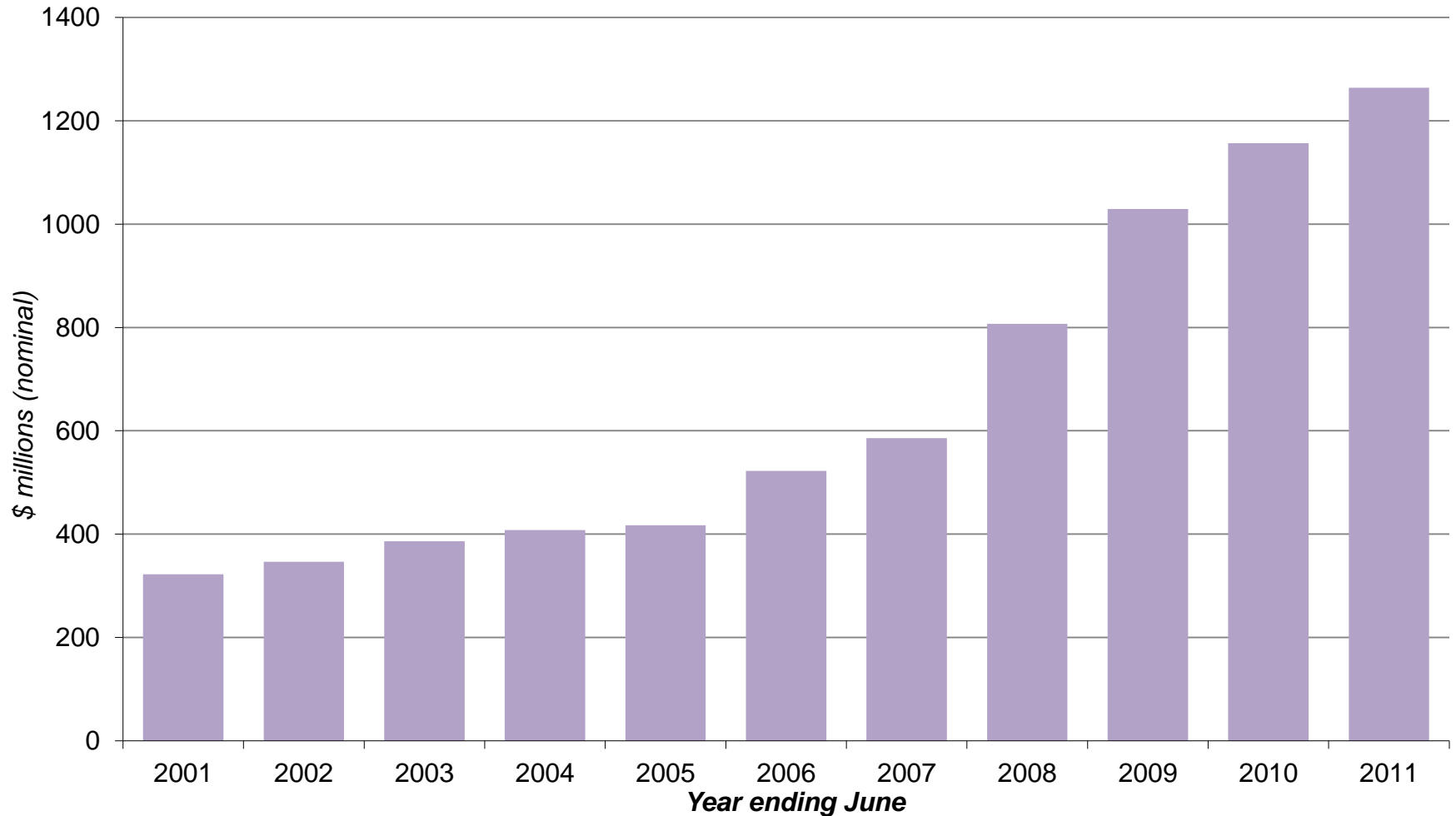
Peter Moss suggested that NZ was ‘Leading the wave’ of early childhood innovation – NZ had ‘Confronted the wicked issues’

New Zealand has also opened up diversity, most obviously in its innovative early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki*. New Zealand has developed a national framework, which brings some coherence to the system around issues of equity and access. One Ministry (Education) is responsible for all ECEC services; there is a single funding system for services, (based on direct funding of services rather than parents); a single curriculum; and a single workforce, which by 2012 will consist of early childhood teachers, educated to graduate level. Underpinning these structures, and perhaps the most radical change of all, New Zealand has an integrative concept that encompasses all services - ‘early childhood education’, a broad and holistic concept that covers, children, families and communities, a concept of ‘education-in-its-broadest-sense’ in which learning and care really are inseparable ... *New Zealand has, in short, understood the need to rethink as well as restructure early childhood education and care [my emphasis] (Peter Moss, CSER, Dublin, 2008)*

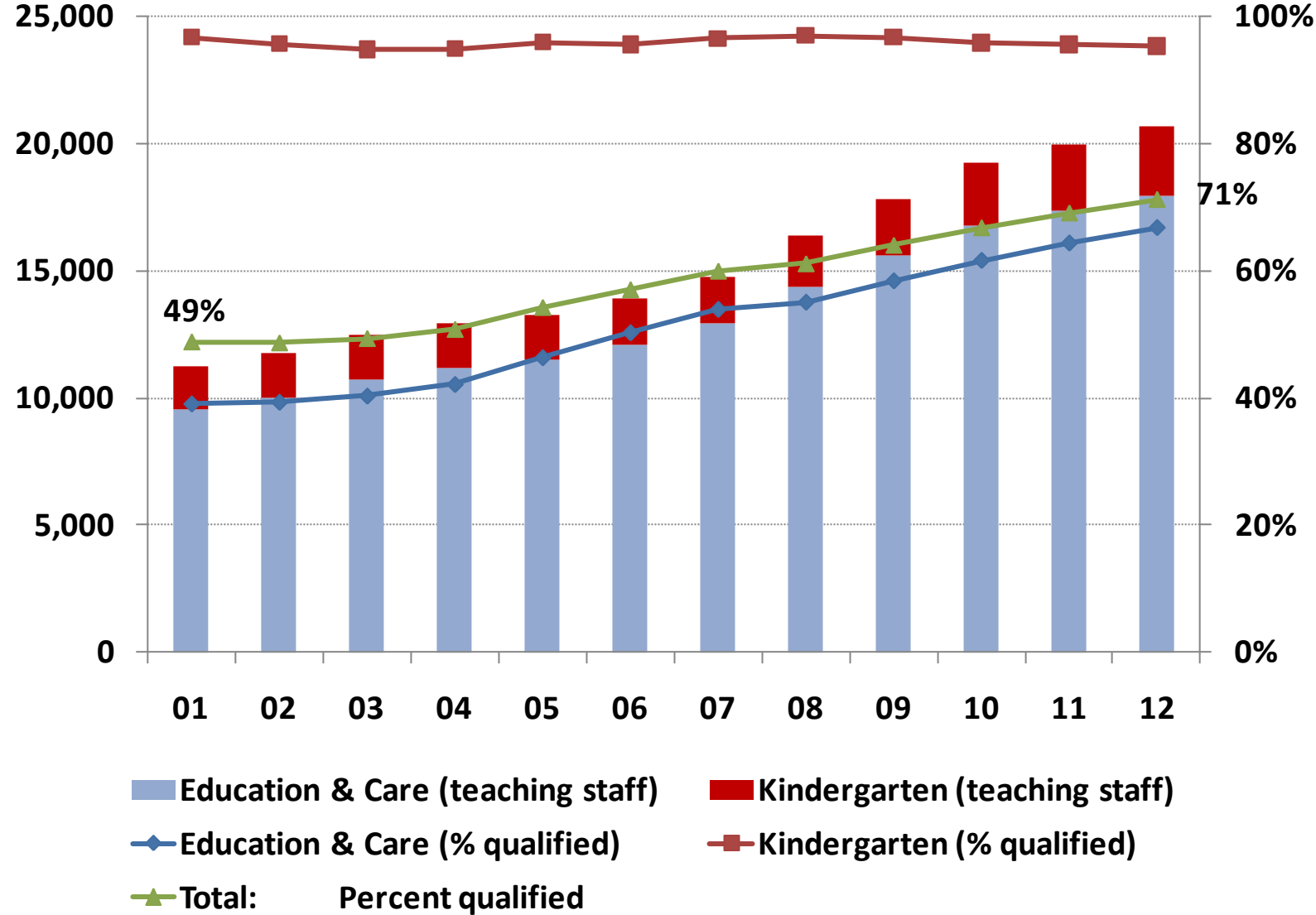
ECE overview in NZ

- Birth to five years
- Policy integration of care and education
- Separation of early childhood and school sectors
- Diverse early childhood services - home and centre-based, parent and teacher-led
- Community – private partnership with state
- Participation rates in early childhood education
 - 96% of 4 year olds
 - 60% of 2 year olds
 - 22% of 1 year olds
- Current funding drivers (under review)
 - ‘Universal subsidy’ up to 30 hours a week
 - ‘Fee subsidy’ for families in need – ‘equity funding’ for some centres
 - 20 hours ‘free’ for 3-4 year olds
 - ‘Quality subsidy’ salary costs of qualified teachers

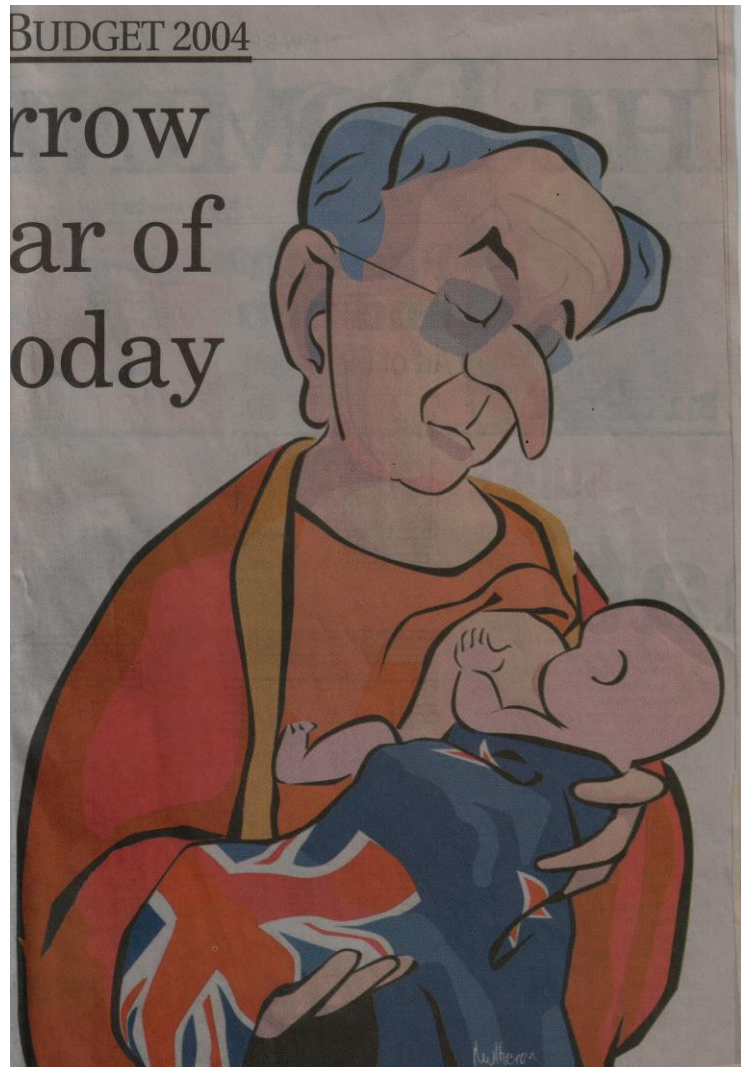
Growth in Government ECE spending



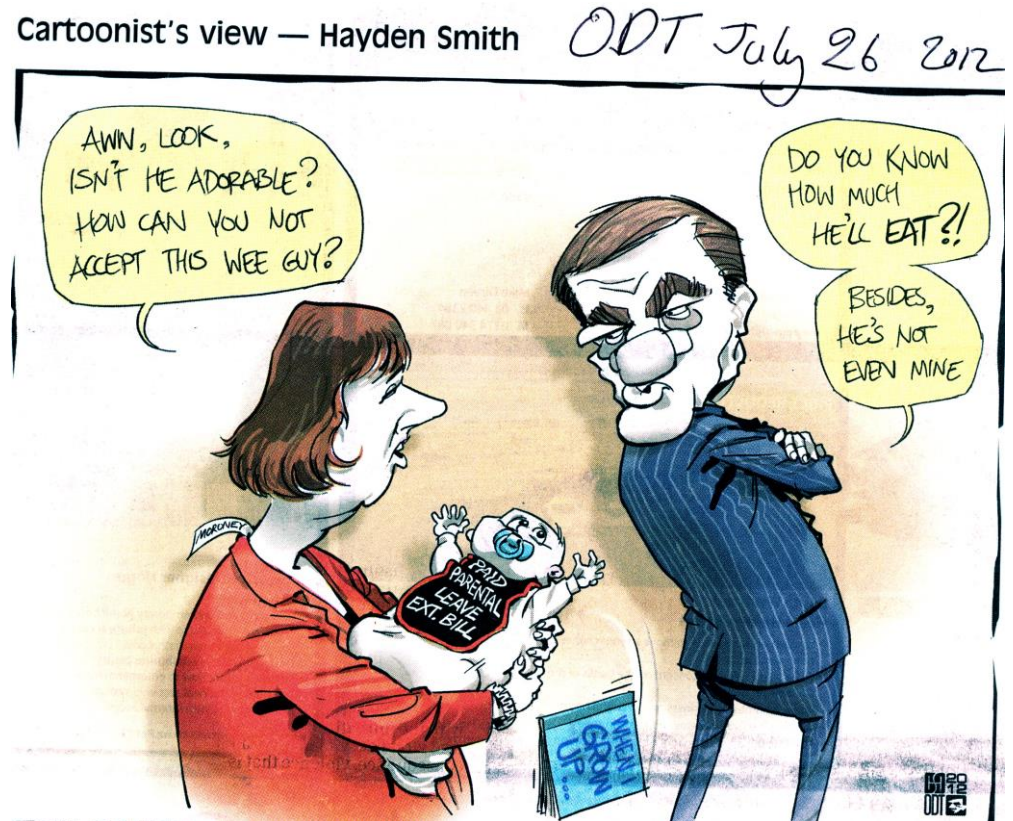
Growth in qualified teachers



Two views of the role of the State (The Treasury) in relation to young children

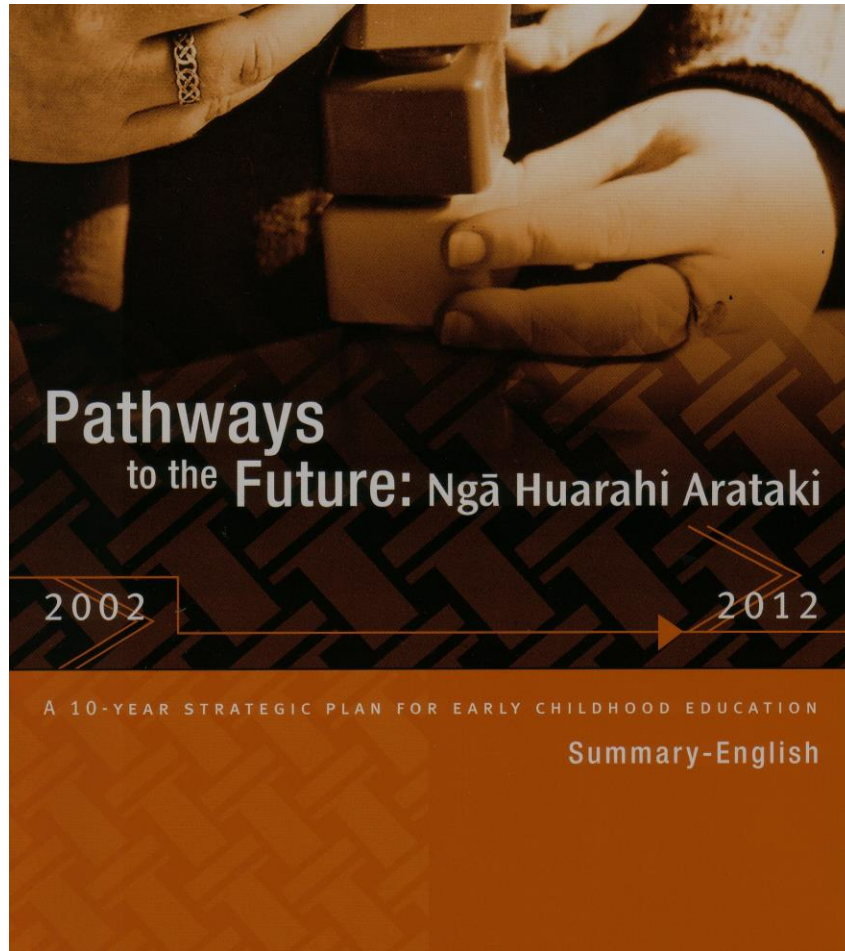


2004: Labour led centre-left
Government 1999-2008



2012: National led centre right
Government 2008 ->

Shifting approaches to 'stepping up' 2002-2013



2011

Labour: investment in inputs
Language of rights

National: accounting for outputs
Language of risk

Strategies for implementing curriculum

University-teacher education alliances with ECE profession

ECE organisation alliances – ‘weaving their own whariki’

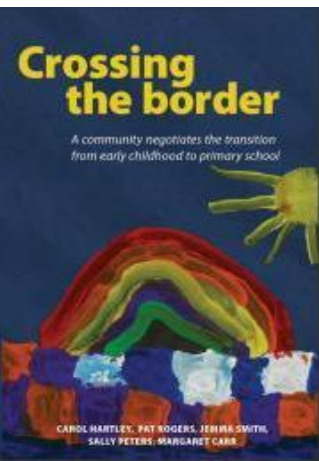
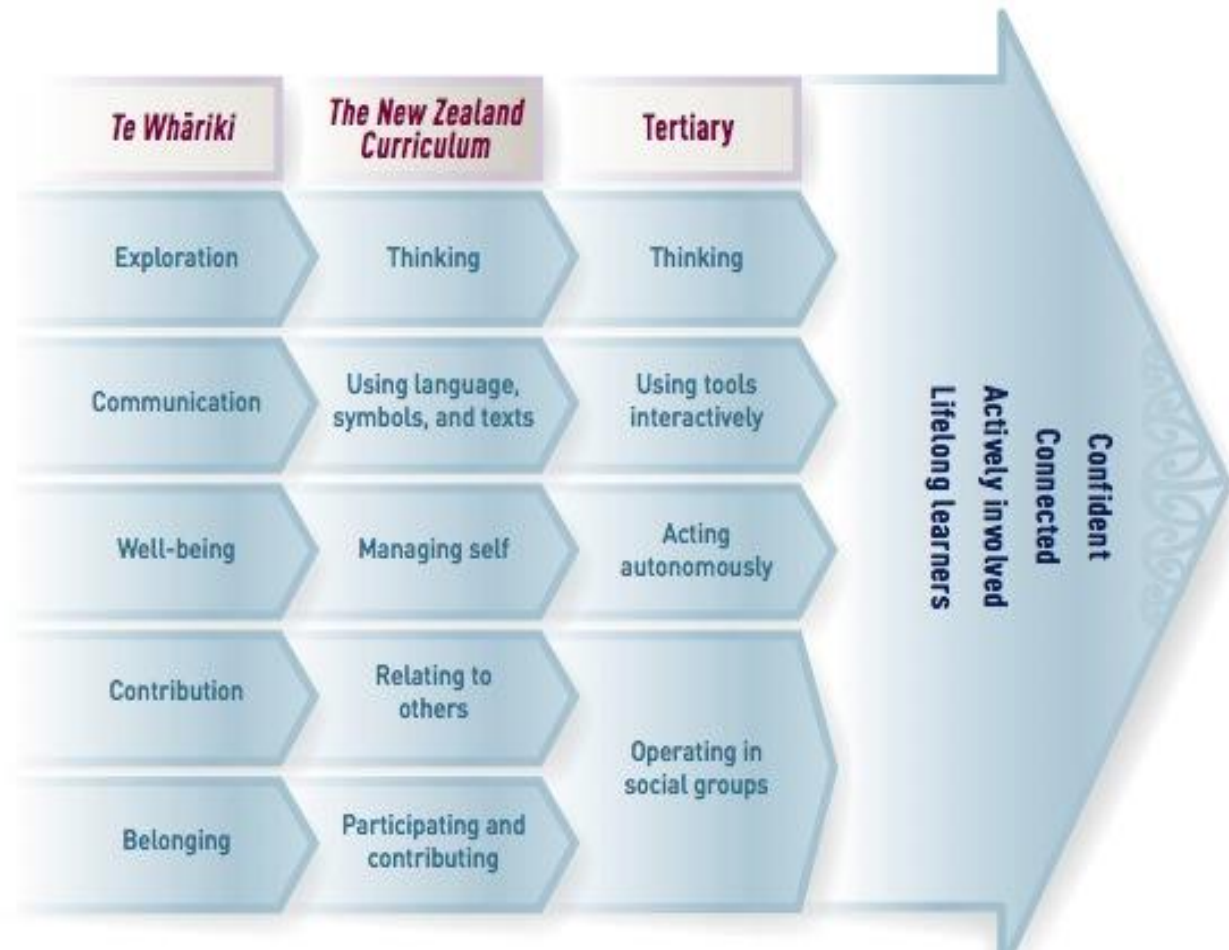
Professional development resources

- Improving school-ECE transitions
- Research and development of frameworks for assessment that teachers like to use
- Centres of Innovation and researcher- teacher partnerships
- Professional development- leadership development
- Education Review Office and its National Reports
- Qualification debate
- ECE Outputs project 2011→

Revised Curriculum for schools, 2007

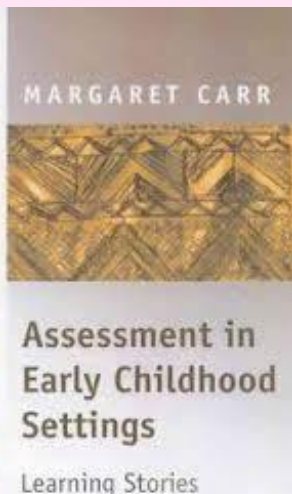
The key competencies: Cross-sector alignment

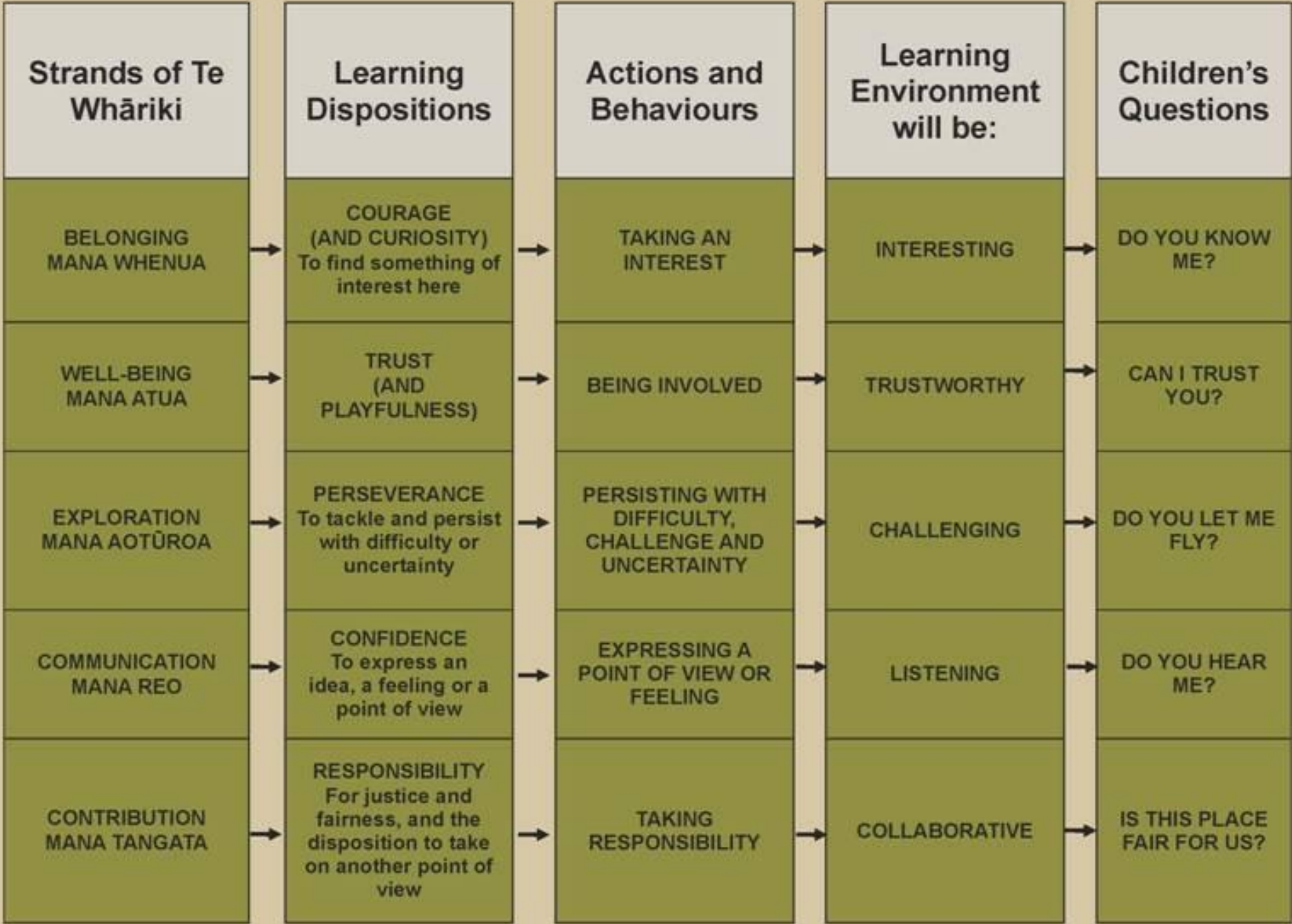
This diagram suggests how the tertiary competencies align with those of *Te Whāriki* and *The New Zealand Curriculum*:



Research on new approaches to assessment

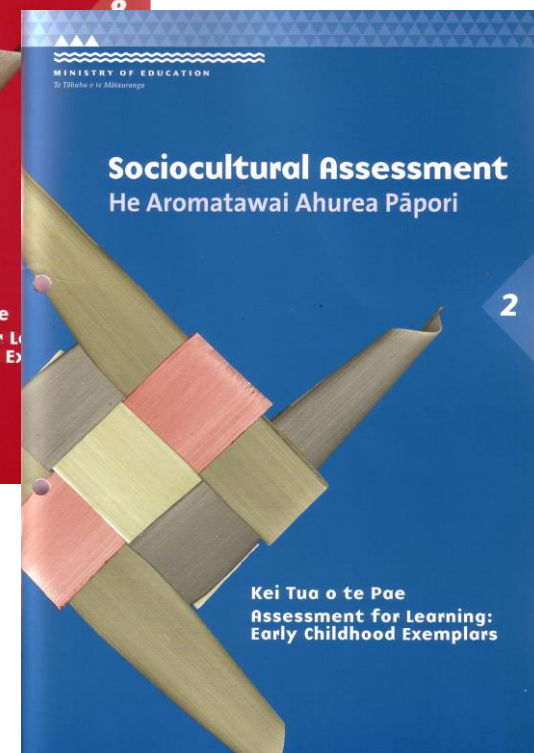
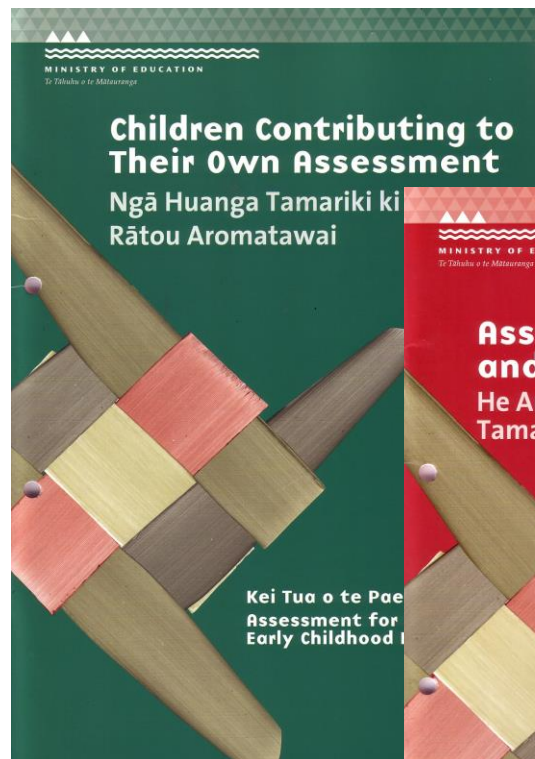
- Assessment must be guided by the principle of ‘empowerment’
- ‘Make visible learning that is valued’
- Assessment is embedded within the curriculum and not added on
- Focus on positive learning dispositions such as resilience, playfulness and reciprocity





Carr, M. (1998) Assessing Children's Experiences in Early Childhood Settings. Three DVDs and an accompanying booklet. Wellington (New Zealand Council for Educational Research)

MOE project and resource development for learning story framework led by Margaret Carr 2004-2009



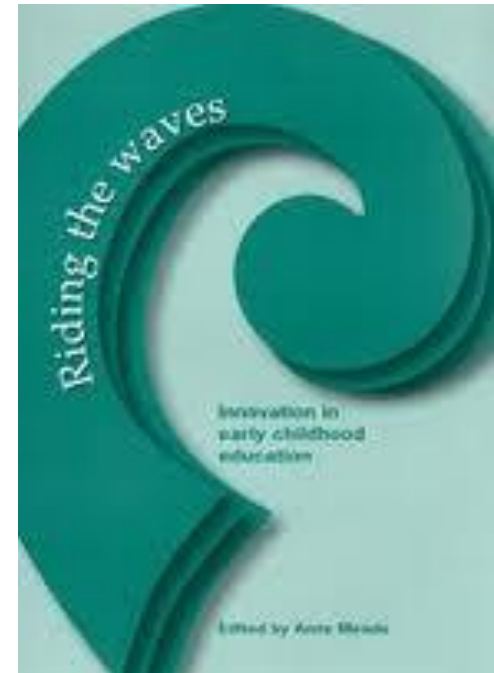
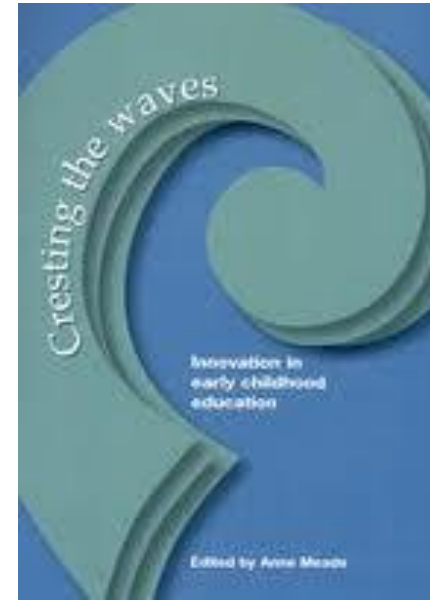
20 books

Noticing
Recognising
Responding
Revisiting



Assessment
Exemplars

CENTRES OF INNOVATION PROJECT 2003-10 LED BY ANNE MEADE





Ministry of Education funded research linking teachers and researchers in joint investigations particularly relating to classroom/centre settings

Covers all sector groups and inclusive of groundbreaking early years research

74 research reports – 99 projects involving over 400 researchers since 2001

Education Review Office National Reports

Selected:

- *Working with Te Whāriki, 2013*
- *Priorities for Children's Learning in Early Childhood Services, 2013*
- *Partnership with Whānau Māori in Early Childhood Services, 2012*
- *Literacy in Early Childhood Services: Good Practice, 2011*
- *Positive Foundations for Learning: Confident and Competent Children in Early Childhood Services, 2011*
- *Quality in Early Childhood Services, 2010*
- *What is Quality* [in kindergarten, childcare, Kohanga Reo, Playcentre, home-based, Montessori] etc. 1994-ongoing

Working with Te Whāriki (2013)

<http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Working-with-Te-Whariki-May-2013>



- 80% of 627 centres reviewed in 2012 were making use of prescribed framework of Principles and Strands for planning and practice. Variable understandings
- 10% of services working in some depth including self review
- 10% limited use, ie. Might be visible in wall displays or in philosophical statements but not evident in practice

ERO findings noted:

- The ECE Taskforce Report (2011) indicated that the issue lay with implementation and not with *Te Whāriki* itself.
- A number of services are not going beyond the framework of Principles and Strands in terms of working with the curriculum document.
- A review or refresh of *Te Whāriki* could provide an opportunity for the sector to engage in useful discussion about the purpose of curriculum and the nature of the framework and guidance needed to achieve this purpose.
- A final challenge is about having a non-prescriptive curriculum mandated through the prescribed framework of principles and strands that is reliant on the professional knowledge of those who implement it.

Released 30th June, 2012,

In what way do qualifications make a difference to quality practice?

Research study surveying centres with 100% qualified teachers and those in the 50-79% band:
Observations, interviews, tests, rating scales.

Early Childhood Teachers' Work in Education and Care Centres: Profiles, patterns and purposes

Anne Meade, Lesley Robinson, Sue Smorti, Margaret Stuart, Joanna Williamson
with Janis Carroll-Lind, Patricia Meagher-Lundberg and Sissie Te Whau



In summary: 100% qualified centres

- Children in these centres benefit from more teachers asking more open-ended questions and posing challenges that lead children to more complex thinking than in centres with 50-79% qualified. Children in these centres with the most qualified teachers have more interactions with qualified teachers, more conversations with these teachers and more episodes of sustained shared thinking and teacher mediation that assist their concept development. The children in these centres have higher scores on indicators to do with independence and concentration (known to be associated with self-control, one of the strongest predictors of later success in life). This is the summary of the effects of 100% qualified teachers on children (Meade, et al, p. 9).

Project for Strengthening Learning Outcomes in ECE 2011->

In response to:

- i) Political interest/concern with questions: ‘What do children take away from ECE? How do we see it? Is it value for money?’
- ii) Message from our research that we could do more: *Te Whāriki* could do more, teachers could do more.

The learning outcomes emphasised in *Te Whāriki* are learning dispositions and working theories.

“We have focused on *mana*, being strong, as an all-encompassing aim, and ‘growing potential’ as a theme for the outcomes” (Project Group, 2012)

Summary directions

- Investment in the infrastructure of quality is necessary but does not guarantee in depth implementation of curriculum – but it is more likely
- In leaner times we have still had useful innovation with smaller scale projects that encourage further research, thinking and often resources that teachers will use – professional development.
- Increasing focus on professional leadership.

Lessons learned in NZ

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