



Early Childhood Education National Industry Advisory Group Hui Minutes

11 June 2025



Minutes – Early Childhood Education National Industry Advisory Group Hui (hui topa)

Date, Time and Location:	11 06 2025 at 10:00-12:00, Microsoft Teams, Ahumairangi
Chair:	Sarah Williams, National Engagement Manager, Toitū te Waiora
Advisory Group Members:	<p>Bonnie Te Ara Henare, Managing Director, Principal Consultant/Senior Education Advisor, AHO Education & International Consultancy Ltd/ Ministry of Education</p> <p>Graeme Severinsen, Academic Leader Undergraduate and Graduate Programmes (ECE), Te Rito Maioha Early Childhood New Zealand</p> <p>Fiapaipai Casserley, Kaiako, He Whānau Manaaki Kindergartens</p> <p>Alice Ingram, Curriculum and Learner Experience Writer, Whānau Āwhina Plunket</p> <p>Kara Daly, Pedagogical Lead, Playcentre Aotearoa</p> <p>Simon Laube, Chief Executive, Early Childhood Council</p> <p>Elizabeth Polley, Senior Academic Staff Member, Open Polytechnic/Te Pūkenga</p> <p>Jesseallen Te Awhe- Raston, Tiamana (Chairman), Te Kōhanga Reo o Ngaio</p> <p>Cathy Wilson, Kaiwhakahaere Matua, Montessori Aotearoa NZ</p>
Secretariat:	Tamar Anstice, National Engagement Project Coordinator, Toitū te Waiora
Attendees:	<p>Sean McKinley, Chief Executive, Toitū te Waiora</p> <p>Mark Ormsby, Poumatua, Toitū te Waiora</p> <p>Cerelia Diprose, Principal Data & Insights Analyst, Toitū te Waiora</p> <p>Lisa Hann, Industry Engagement Lead National, Toitū te Waiora</p>
Apologies:	<p>Logan Warwick, Registered Kaiako, Kids In The View Early Learning</p> <p>Raewyn Overton-Stuart, Managing Director, PAUA Early Learning</p> <p>Zane McCarthy, Teacher/ECE sector representative on National Executive, Campus Creche Trust/NZEI Te Riu Roa</p>

Industry Updates: Summarised Minutes	
Commentary:	<p>Transition from WDCs to ISBs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The sector is preparing for the disestablishment of Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) and establishment of Industry Skills Boards (ISBs). Concerns raised about inadequate proposed ISB coverage for Early Childhood Education (ECE). Sector advised to continue engagement through NIAGs as they transition to ISBs. <p>Data Insights & Workforce Analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation of in-depth data on ECE qualifications, workforce demographics, workload, injuries, and pay equity by the data team. Trends indicate decreasing enrolments and increasing physical strain and injuries in ECE roles. Significant gender pay gap persists in ECE, and concerns were raised about the accuracy and interpretation of this data. <p>Workforce Challenges & Sector Conditions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical teacher shortages, especially for qualified staff. Budget 2025 and funding changes triggered major concern across the sector. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of funding in the ECE sector is impacting the retention of both qualified and unqualified staff. ECE centres with low student enrolments are at increased risk of closure due to new funding guidelines. ECE workforce salaries have not kept pace with inflation, contributing to sector instability Increased demand for ECE services (e.g., two-year waitlists in kōhanga reo), yet services are stretched. Ongoing concerns about pay parity, funding constraints, and operational viability for smaller centres. Institutions like Te Rito Maioha reported difficulty placing students due to limited availability of registered teachers in remote areas, with some students needing to travel up to 3 hours to access a suitable placement. This situation raises equity concerns and may deter enrolment in teacher education programmes, especially for those based in rural or underserved regions. <p>Neurodiversity and Inclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rising demand for understanding and supporting neurodiverse children and whānau. Efforts underway to gather relevant data and PLD resources tailored to Māori and Pasifika contexts. <p>Qualifications, Compliance & Curriculum Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updates on unit standards changes, programme reviews, and upcoming qualification reviews. Concerns raised about a "dumbing down" of qualifications and increased regulatory burden. Need to protect the identity and integrity of Te Whāriki amidst growing pressure to align with primary school language and standards. ACC data indicating elevated rates of workplace injuries in the ECE sector suggests a need for a targeted health and safety micro-credential to be developed and embedded. <p>Key Points Made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ISB Coverage: ECE not well represented in current ISB plans; a renaming and clearer inclusion in "Education, Health, and Social Services" ISB proposed. Funding Concerns: Sector-wide disappointment in Budget 2025; 0.5% increase viewed as inadequate, especially for small centres.

Industry Updates: Summarised Minutes	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pay Parity: Disparities in male vs. female pay, closures linked to policy inequities, particularly affecting small and community-based centres.• Data Insights:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Increase in medium to heavy workload.○ Increase in 1–4-week time off for workplace injuries (esp. back injuries).○ Pay equity gap widening to 21% between men and women in ECE.• Neurodiversity: Lacking national data; requested to share internal data to support qualification development.• ECE Sector Direction: A call to embed health and safety into qualifications and increase professionalisation without compromising Te Whāriki.

Actions:

1.	
Reference #	20250611/01
Presenter:	Hera Williams
Commentary:	Members were reminded and encouraged to make a submission on the Education and Training (Vocational Education and Training System) Amendment Bill.

1.	
Actions:	Prepare and submit feedback to the Select Committee on the Amendment Bill to ensure adequate Industry Skills Board (ISB) coverage for Early Childhood Education (ECE) following the link that Tamar has sent out alongside minutes.
2.	
Reference #	20250611/02
Documents:	ECE Industry Snapshot
Presenters:	Lisa Hann/Cerelia Diprose
Commentary:	Members are encouraged to contribute additional data where possible (e.g., on neurodiversity, workload, and pay equity).
Actions:	A reminder will be sent out on July 1 st , 2025 to all members to send through any relevant data pertaining to neurodiversity, workload, and pay equity to help strengthen investment advice for ECE sector workforce.
3.	
Reference #	20250611/03
Presenters:	Hera Williams
Commentary:	ACC data indicating elevated rates of workplace injuries in the ECE sector suggests a need for a targeted health and safety micro-credential to be developed and embedded
Actions:	Investigate opportunities to embed health and safety content into ECE qualifications and/or micro-credentials.
4.	
Reference #	20250611/04

4.	
Presenters:	Hera Williams
Commentary:	Graeme mentioned that Te Rito Maioha are currently in the process of creating a Neurodiversity micro-credential that will be offered to ākonga once it has been approved by NZQA.
Actions:	Graeme to share neurodiversity micro-credential with the group as soon as it has been approved by NZQA. Hera to check in with Graeme closer to the next hui.