



## Early Childhood Education Teacher Pay Parity Campaign Booklet

*The benefits of ECE to children and to society  
depend on having a high-quality workforce.  
No teacher working in ECE should be paid  
less than teachers in kindergartens and  
schools*

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## PREFACE

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*Pre-school teachers often earn far less than they could elsewhere with their levels of education. Improving pay and recognition would help develop and retain highly-skilled staff. ('Good practice for good jobs' report: OECD, 2019)*

The benefits of early childhood education (ECE) to children - and to society - depend on having a high-quality workforce. This cannot be achieved without adequate pay.

So, it is strange that at the present time more than 17,000 qualified and certificated teachers in non-kindergarten (ECE) are overlooked by the government when it comes to funding pay parity and by the Ministry of Education when it comes to requiring employers to pay at the rates required to achieve pay parity.

Yet these teachers perform the same job, have undergone similar training to gain equivalent tertiary qualifications, and meet exactly the same professional requirements for a practising certificate as their kindergarten, primary and secondary peers. Teachers who work in ECE are not babysitters, they are teaching professionals and they must be highly skilled to be effective in teaching.

The government has applied equality of remuneration for kindergarten, primary and secondary teachers. Not extending the same respect to all teachers in ECE through the provision of pay parity is producing an exodus of teaching staff and employer demands for foreign labour and for a loosening of qualification requirements. We are also seeing a rise of stop-gap measures such as daily reliance on relief teachers to cover staff vacancies and also unqualified staff forced to take on the duties of certificated teachers.

A high-quality ECE workforce is an issue of high relevance to employment and business in NZ. The provision of ECE enables parents and caregivers to engage in paid work and further education. ECE is an important part of NZ's economic infrastructure to invest in - as important as our roads and hospitals.

Our concern must be for the 153,000 babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers in non-kindergarten publicly funded and licensed ECE centres and home-based services and their parents and whānau. Families rely on the teachers with whom their child has bonded, and thrives in learning alongside, to be there for their child every day and to remain passionate about their work.

Pay parity for all ECE teachers, alongside ensuring the health and safety of children, is now the number one issue for the early childhood sector. As you will read in this booklet these two issues are not unrelated.

The Government must and can square things up for all non-kindergarten ECE teaching staff. This booklet explains what the government will get in return for

doing this, how pay parity can be achieved, and identifies potential roadblocks that must not be allowed to get in the way of or delay equality of remuneration being extended to teachers in all ECE services.

“Children who participate in quality early childhood education enjoy the benefits throughout the rest of their lives. They do better at school, in tertiary education, and when they enter the workforce. Investment in children is one of the most important investments any government can make.” (Labour's Education Manifesto)

### **What you can do**

Inform your local MPs, people in your organisation and in your community circles about this problem. Explain that the goodwill of the majority of teachers in ECE is being taken for granted and such exploitation is not right. Talk with them about the benefits of extending equality of remuneration to all ECE teachers, such as for attracting high-quality student teachers, retaining teachers and stopping the current exodus from the workforce. A high-quality well-remunerated workforce is critically important in ECE because children in this age group (birth to 5 or 6 years) are learning more and at a faster rate than at any other time.

The Labour-Led Coalition Government has an “ambition to ensure all New Zealanders do well but especially our children” (Prime Minister Jacinda Arden Speech, 30 May 2019). Ask Prime Minister Jacinda Arden and Education Minister Chris Hipkins what they are doing to get pay parity for all teachers in ECE. Don't accept the excuse that it would cost too much – they have shown in regard to other teacher groups that money can be found when pressure is applied. Ask them why in regard to ECE there should even be a need for pressure and why are they are not taking responsibility for putting things right.

Both Arden and Hipkins are parents and both have young children. If they don't want to end discrimination against teachers in ECE for their children, at least they can do it for all other children. They have the power to direct the Ministry of Education and persuade cabinet to fund pay parity.

Share copies of this Campaign Booklet widely. Copies are available – email: [admin@childforum.com](mailto:admin@childforum.com) or online at <https://www.childforum.com/reports/1772-teacher-pay-parity-campaign.html>

There is also a petition at <https://our.actionstation.org.nz/p/ece-parity> Please encourage all teachers, parents, whānau and the wider community to sign this petition before it closes.

For a poster to print or post on your social media pages, and sample postcards and letters to send to political leaders go online to the [Pay Parity](#) page.

If you don't believe you can make a difference the best thing you can do is make a start. You can help by doing even just one of the above things.

Together we can make what might seem to be impossible - possible.

Sarah Alexander    Karen Girvan    David Haynes

ECE Teacher Pay Parity Steering Group

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## 1. The Lead-Up to the Campaign for Pay Parity

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We have all seen the recent strikes in the primary and secondary area regarding pay and you probably watched and paid close attention to what happened. The Minister of Education was adamant that teachers should drop their demands because there was no more money.

But as the teachers persisted and public support for primary and secondary teachers grew the Minister of Education gave in. Secondary school principals held out for more and they got it.

It was no surprise that almost immediately following primary and secondary teacher acceptance of the government's offer, the Ministry of Education confirmed pay parity with primary would continue for teachers in kindergartens. Negotiation of a new collective agreement for kindergarten teachers with kindergarten employers took just a week.

Unfortunately, pay parity was not on the table for teachers in non-kindergarten ECE services. Throughout the Ministry of Education kept its relationship with kindergarten employers exclusive.

However, the ground is beginning to weaken on two fronts. First, the ministry's special relationship with kindergarten associations is coming under fire, and its legality is being questioned (for example, see [Haynes, 2019](#)). Second, the early childhood sector has woken to the facts that the professional requirements for teachers in all ECE services are the same and kindergartens are no longer providing a service that is different to what education and care centres provide.

In the [2019 ECE survey](#) of the needs and wishes of the early childhood sector, 93% of 900 respondents wanted all ECE teachers to have pay parity with teachers who worked in primary/ kindergarten. 4% did not express a view. Only 3% (who were for-profit employers) felt that teacher wages in publicly-funded services should not be dictated but left up to the employer to determine.

On the basis of what the survey showed, ChildForum organised a national meeting on ECE Teacher Pay in Wellington on 14 July 2019.

[Video](#) footage was published online and a special page was created for the publication of opinion pieces and articles ([Collection of ECE Teacher Pay Parity articles](#)).

On 15<sup>th</sup> July a headline on Stuff was: ['Teachers are teachers': Early childhood teachers call for pay parity](#)

A petition calling for pay parity for all ECE teachers has started and has already received more than 10,000 signatures (see <https://our.actionstation.org.nz/p/ece-parity>).



## 2. The Problem

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### 2.1. Having a qualified workforce brings with it demands for higher wages reflective of qualification and professional status

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has argued the need for countries to invest in improved training and qualifications since **this affects the quality of ECE and with this, child development outcomes** (“Starting Strong II” report, OECD, 2006).

NZ government policy has for a number of years supported improvement in the level of qualification for staff working in ECE.

But, having a qualified workforce brings with it demands for higher wages reflective of qualification and professional status.

When demands for higher wages are not met, the risk of losing qualified and certificated teachers is heightened. It is further heightened when staff find they can easily walk into another job outside of ECE teaching, which is the case right now due to a nation-wide labour shortage in many industries.

The government needs to decide if it truly values quality ECE and respond now to ensure equality of remuneration for all teachers in ECE.

The quality of ECE for children is too important for the government to say that the wage discrimination experienced by non-kindergarten ECE teachers is not its problem – because it is.

### 2.2. Teachers are subsidising ECE

In no other sector of education are teachers told that they cannot be paid more because without an increase in government funding, any pay increase will have to be made up through higher fee charges to parents. But this is happening in ECE and no teacher wants to see any child missing out or families experiencing increased financial hardship because of them.

The Ministry of Education provides funding per child per hour to services and the funding rates vary across types of services. Appendix 4 shows the funding rate tables for different services. Kindergartens have the highest funding rates because kindergarten funding includes a component for pay parity.

As well as disparity in ECE service funding there is a problem of an over-supply of ECE services in many parts of the country, leading to services struggling to keep rolls full and remain financially sustainable. So, if teachers are to keep their jobs and services remain open, they are asked to accept low pay and not ask for a



pay increase in order that special deals can be offered to attract new enrolments such as extending 20 free hours of ECE to children under-3-years (funding is only provided for children 3 years and older) and giving an additional 10 hours free to 3 to 6-year olds.

## 2.3. Current pay levels

A beginning primary or early childhood trained teacher working in a school or kindergarten can expect to be paid at least \$48,410 in their first year (Step 1) and \$50,470 (Step 2) in their second year of teaching (P1E, P2E, P3E qualification levels, see Appendix 2). But should that same teacher or one holding the same level of qualification work in a centre that is not a Ministry of Education recognised kindergarten, then he or she can expect to be paid just \$45,491 (or \$21.87 an hour, see Appendix 1).

Should the beginning teacher hold an advanced qualification such as an honours degree in teaching then in kindergarten and primary the starting salary is \$52,736 (P3+E) while in non-kindergarten ECE the rate set by the Ministry of Education is \$46,832.

The Ministry of Education does not set any further salary steps for teachers in non-kindergartens, nor does it require that teachers who take on leadership roles such as that of a head teacher are paid in line with the responsibility they hold.

In 2020 pay levels on the basic scale for beginning teachers in kindergartens and schools will rise to \$49,862 and \$51,984 for Steps 1 and 2 respectively. The top of the scale for a teacher with no leadership responsibilities is currently \$80,500 and this is increasing to \$90,000 (or \$43.27 an hour) in 2021.

Home-based services that are required by law to have certificated teachers, and parent-led services such as Playcentre that choose to employ certificated teachers to help meet the person responsible requirements, are not even funded enough to allow for the ministry to set attestation rates for teacher salaries. Certificated teachers in these services can be paid as little as the minimum adult wage in NZ of \$17.70 an hour.

Differences in remuneration can be significant for any teacher moving from working at a kindergarten or school to a non-kindergarten ECE service. For example, an experienced kindergarten teacher who moved to a different city with her family and took up a comparable teaching position in an ECE centre that is not a kindergarten is worse off by more than \$12 an hour.

Centres with qualified teachers who do not hold a current practising certificate may pay their teachers, as little as or not much more than, the minimum adult wage of \$17.70 an hour. This is because there is no requirement through salary

attestation with the Ministry of Education or otherwise to pay them more than this amount.

Worryingly, the low dollar amount of salaries is only one part of the story because effective earnings are reduced by working longer contact hours.

Those who work in non-kindergarten ECE can work many more hours in the week and weeks in the year, with children attending year-round and often for 8 – 10 hours or more a day. Teachers can be lucky to have one or a few non-contact hours a week. Most do not get school holidays. Annual leave and sick leave provision can be as little as the bare minimum required under NZ employment law. (Compare this to the additional benefits given to teachers in kindergartens as detailed in Appendix 3)

## **2.4. Why would anyone want to spend a lot of time and money to become a qualified teacher and work in ECE today?**

Anyone considering a career in teaching in ECE today will find that:

- i. School leavers and other people working in different industries with no experience and qualifications may be paid as much, if not more than qualified and certificated teachers working in non-kindergarten ECE.
- ii. The gap between the minimum adult wage in NZ and Ministry of Education salary attestation rates for ECE teachers has narrowed. The government increased the minimum adult wage by 12% between 2017 and 2019 (it was \$15.75 in 2017 and is now \$17.70) while over the same period the Ministry of Education increased salary attestation rates by only 1% for degree qualified teachers.
- iii. Current wages make a mockery of the training and professionalism of teachers. To quote from a [report](#):

*We recently lost a fully qualified teacher who is going to pick kiwifruit. She will get \$5 an hour more in her new position.*

*Our pay is rubbish - my son earns more than me working at duty free, I earn just above the living wage - for 3 years of study and two to get registered. The pay's not reflective of all the hard work we put in.*

Not only has the pay for non-kindergarten ECE teachers declined in relative terms to the minimum adult wage for all workers in NZ, but the current labour shortage in our economy means teachers can vote with their feet and leave because they can much more easily get a job in a different industry or service sector.

## 2.5. Slippage in the quality of ECE has become a serious worry

Quality teaching is a key lever for improving outcomes for diverse children ([Alexander and Ministry of Education, 2003](#)) and quality teachers are central to this.

Andreas Schleicher Director for Education and Skills at the OECD, notes in a report presented to the 2019 International Summit on the Teaching Profession, that to attract and hold on to the most suitable candidates for early childhood teaching one of the most important things countries need to do is to offer adequate pay.

There is evidence that low salaries can deter skilled professionals from choosing to work in ECE. Salaries can affect ECE teacher job satisfaction and increase turnover rates.

High teacher turnover and experiencing a succession of different relief teachers over weeks and even months is harmful to children's mental health and intellectual development.

It is critically important that young children are able form secure attachments. [Dr Mary Moloney](#) from Ireland said in an interview here in NZ on ECE teacher pay: "No child should arrive in the morning at their service to find their key teacher or primary caregiver gone due to low pay and/or bad work conditions." Dealing with one transition can be hard on a young child, and dealing with multiple changes in teachers and different relief teachers on an almost daily basis sometimes over many months can be even more difficult.

Effective teaching of young children requires a very high level of skill and pedagogical knowledge – and not to forgot – emotional and physical energy! Even when teachers stay in the sector, when they are disillusioned and overworked for the pay that they get, they can withdraw and disengage from children and from their work.

In ECE services right now [unqualified staff](#) are being asked to take on unrealistic workloads and do the work of teachers. Unqualified staff are being relied on to implement Te Whāriki which requires a lot of skill to be able to do so successfully because planning is conducted 'on the fly' for individual children as they pursue their interests and assessment is more complex than administering a test.

It can be concluded that providing pay parity to qualified and certificated teachers in all ECE services will help to uplift the quality of teaching, support positive and nurturing teacher-child relationships and hugely benefit children's learning outcomes.

## 2.6. Current methods and policy are failing

As already mentioned, government policy has for a number of years supported improvement in the level of qualification for staff working in ECE. The current education minister, Chris Hipkins has stated his ambition to achieve a well-qualified ECE workforce.

However, between 2016 and 2018 the percentage of qualified teachers and teachers who also hold a practicing certificate has not statistically changed - 69 to 68% of all staff in teacher-led ECE services are qualified and 67 to 66% of all staff also hold a practising certificate.

Staff in teaching positions in education and care centres are less likely than staff in kindergartens to hold a practising certificate. In 2018 9% of all teaching staff in kindergartens and 37% in education and care centres did not hold a practising certificate. A reason for this difference could be that the Ministry of Education currently sets salary attestation rates that are considerably lower than the Kindergarten Teachers Head Teachers and Senior Teachers' Collective Agreement, 2019 – 2022 (KTCA) (see Appendices 1 & 2). Lower remuneration does not give staff in teaching positions an incentive to work toward becoming qualified and certificated.

Last year the Ministry of Education applied to have early childhood teachers added to the Essential Skills in Demand Lists.

*The Essential Skills in Demand Lists aim to facilitate the entry of appropriately skilled migrants to fill skill shortages and to reduce costs and time delays for employers seeking staff. However, this objective must be balanced by the need to ensure that there are no suitably skilled or qualified New Zealand citizens or resident workers available to undertake the work, and that the shortage is genuine.*

The addition of ECE teachers to the lists appears to have made little difference to teacher supply. It has however, given our existing ECE workforce an even stronger sense that they are not valued, and a clear message that the government and employers would prefer to replace them with migrants instead of paying them what they deserve.

In August 2019 National's spokesperson for Early Childhood Education Nicola Willis released survey results showing 27% respondents reported that a staffing vacancy for a qualified teacher had taken more than 3 months to fill and a further 36% respondents reported it taking more than 6 months.

The \$4 million government package announced in September 2019 to address the teacher shortage in ECE by bringing in foreign labour and meeting relocation costs may help to bring in some more teachers but it does nothing to retain our

current teachers and tell former ECE teachers who have switched to working in primary schools or anywhere else that there is a reason to come back to ECE teaching.

Applying equality of remuneration to non-kindergarten ECE staff will help to reverse the current exodus, improve retention, and be far more effective in attracting new teaching recruits than anything that is currently being done.

Providing pay parity will give a clear message to teachers who have had enough of low pay and poor work conditions that the government actually cares, and it cares enough to take action to give teachers the security of knowing that they will not be paid any less if they work in non-kindergarten ECE.

## 3. The Solution

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### 3.1. Improve salary attestation rates

Payment of teacher salaries made directly through a central payroll system and/or based on numbers in the ministry's information management system (known as 'ELI') would be the most efficient method of providing pay parity, whilst reducing any potential for salaries to be manipulated or funding skimmed by service owners for other purposes. For this to happen the funding system needs to be overhauled.

Until such time as the funding system is overhauled, pay parity can be implemented using a very simple mechanism that already exists – attestation of certificated teacher salaries.

There is nothing to prevent the Ministry of Education from raising or changing the current salary attestation rates to at least the same levels as in the KTCA as agreed by the Ministry of Education for pay parity.

As to the amounts needed to increase funding rates by in order to ensure services can afford to pay their qualified and certificated teachers at least at the KTCA rates, this would be something that ministry people who do economic modelling would work out. Services are required by the Ministry to provide copies of their financial audited reports and analysis of these alongside comparison with the salary component within kindergarten funding rates should help the ministry work out the funding increases necessary for pay parity.

### 3.2. Make sure funding for pay parity results in pay parity

Some service providers are doing their best to pay their teachers well and are struggling financially due to this. However, there are others who are underpaying teachers to deliver a profit or make money for other purposes. Increasing funding to service providers to enable pay parity could result in greater sucking on the public teat. It might seem bizarre to suggest this, but the evidence is as follows.

In the ECE 2019 survey of the early childhood sector 54% of 900 respondents said that all teachers in ECE should have pay parity if all services were funded at the same subsidy rates as kindergartens. But an additional 39% who supported pay parity for all ECE teachers did not think funding needed to be increased for services to provide pay parity – suggesting they either thought that the cost of giving pay parity could be funded out of service profit or met through other revenue. So clearly, while pay parity is unaffordable for some services without increased financial support from the government, the sector also recognises that there are service operators who could currently afford to pay teachers better, but choose not to. See also articles such as: “ECE is big business in NZ”, and “How much funding is too much to go on management salaries and profits?”

Therefore, there needs to be a way of ensuring that service providers funded for pay parity actually provide this to their teachers.

Only kindergarten association employers are party to the KTCA and pay parity agreed by the Ministry of Education is provided to all teachers in kindergarten, NZEI union members and non-members alike.

Since no other service provider is party to the KTCA (and, due to the Ministry of Education’s exclusive relationship with kindergartens, there seems to be no mechanism to allow other service providers to become a party) an increase in funding alone to match the Ministry’s funded rates for kindergartens without contractual obligations or public accountability is unlikely to deliver pay parity to teachers in every non-kindergarten ECE service.

Any funding increase could, for example, get quickly used up in general operational costs such as rent and repairs. Or, service providers could choose to use it to reduce fees for parents thus competing more strongly with other service providers for child enrolments. Funds could also be used, for example, to acquire or build more centres, pay themselves more, or pay higher dividends to shareholders.

But, funding for pay parity can be safeguarded through the current process of attestation of qualified and certificated teacher salaries. It would be pointless for the funding of non-kindergarten services to be increased for pay parity if the ministry does not continue to require attestation of certificated teacher salaries

and if the salary attestation rates are not changed to reflect what the ministry agreed to in the recently renegotiated KTCA. Salary attestation provides a simple and easy to administer check that funding is passed on to teachers. This method of accountability gives teachers protection in the knowledge that the ministry will follow-up on their behalf if underpayment occurs.

For public confidence that no ECE service owner is excessively creaming off funding for other purposes, early childhood entities, companies or not, need to offer to (or be required to) annually publish their audited annual report, and those of their subsidiaries, containing details of distributions to shareholders and those matters detailed in section 211 of the Companies Act 1993 regarding disclosure of directors' and employees' remuneration and other benefits.

## **4. What Cannot Help as Much as We Might Want to Believe**

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### **4.1. Joining a union**

Education Minister Chis Hipkins has told complainants that if they want pay parity, they should join a union:

*If you are a member of NZEI Te Riu Roa, I encourage you to raise your concerns about pay with them, as they can advocate on your behalf.*

*If early learning teachers are members of NZEI Te Riu Roa, they are able to raise their concerns with NZEI directly, as the union is best placed to advocate on their behalf.*

But recommending to teachers to join a union will not help for three reasons.

First, it is hard on teachers in ECE on very low wages to pay the high union fees when they have children of their own to feed. Unless their service is party to a collective contract under the union it is not going to make a difference to their lives if they join.

Second, NZEI Te Riu Roa does not determine salaries. The Ministry of Education sets the parameters for teacher pay. And, what employers can pay their teaching staff is constrained by government funding decisions.

Third, a union's strongest weapon is the threat of industrial action. We saw that in action with primary teachers. If teachers in ECE strike, their services must close on the days of the strike. The Ministry of Education will not provide funding for days that a service is closed. The service ends up with less funding



and therefore even less ability to address pay rates. In ECE, industrial action is a recipe for service insolvency not for pay parity.

The current government inherited this situation as did the government before it and the government before that... but the current government, not the union, can put things right.

## **4.2. The Government's 10-year ECE strategic plan**

The government's draft 10-year Strategic Plan for ECE states an intention to give: "support for more consistent and improved teacher salaries and conditions in the early learning sector." It is not explained in the document what "more consistent" or "improved" would mean. Government support for pay parity is not mentioned.

This goal in a 10-year plan that has not been finalised or started yet is all very good, but until the outcome is achieved and teachers see tangible results - it does not mean anything. There is no guarantee that the present government will be in power in 2021, let alone for the next 10 years to see the plan through.

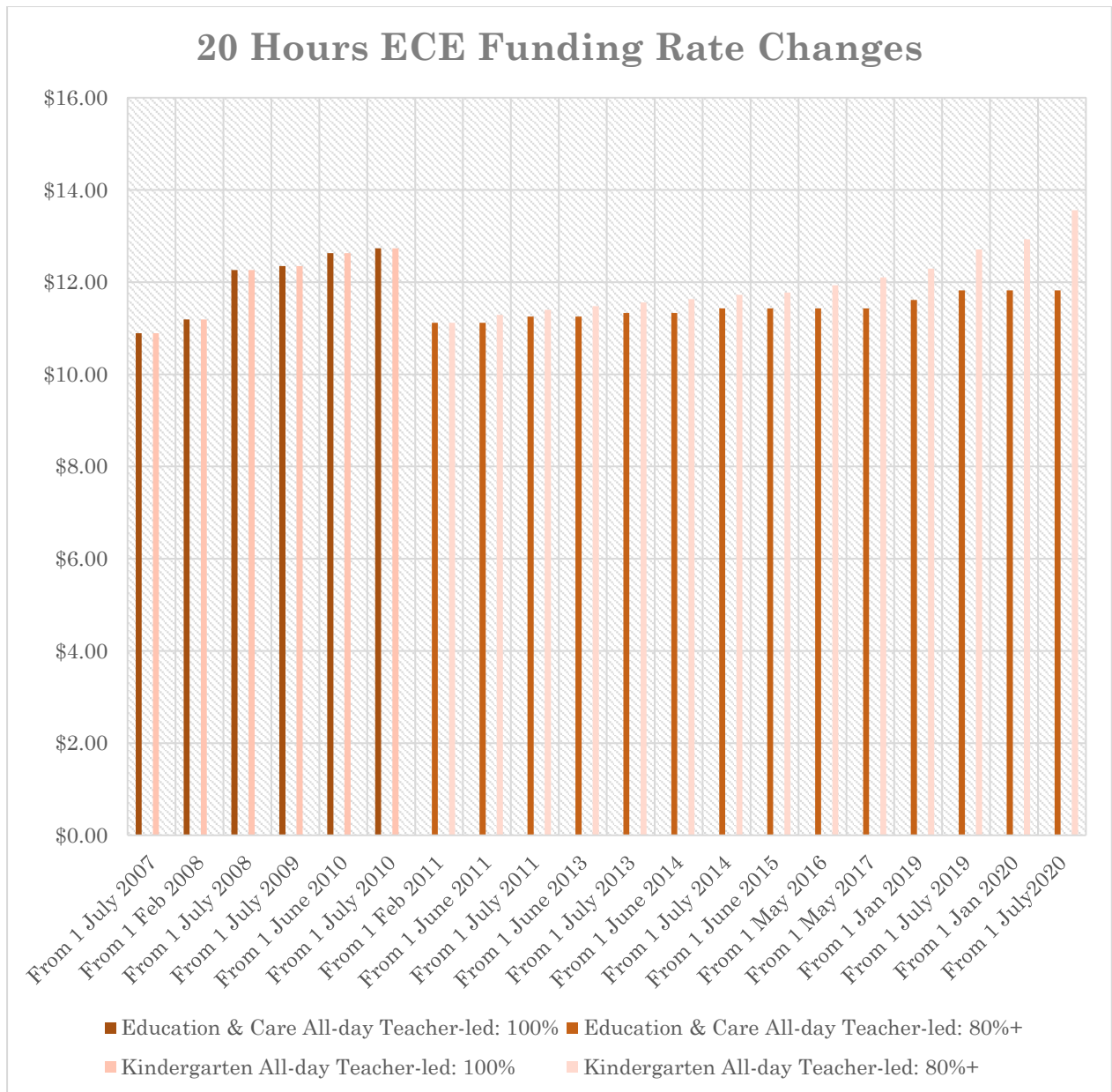
## **4.3. The re-introduction of a funding band for 100% qualified and certificated teachers and the exacerbation of inequity**

Prior to the last election Labour promised it would restore funding for 100% qualified and certificated teachers in ECE. Education Minister Chis Hipkins has said he will make sure this is achieved before the next election in 2020.

While this would be great, unfortunately it will not help to improve teacher wages or provide for pay parity. It will also not make recruiting qualified and certificated teaching staff any easier for services.

The policy change for funding for 100% qualified and certificated teachers could exacerbate rather than mitigate inequity because of consistent social selection into ECE. Families who can afford to pay more are more likely to have children in ECE that already has 100% qualified and certificated teachers, so the funding band will advantage their service but not fundamentally change anything.

Also, the government is continuing to increase the gap in funding rates per hour per child paid to kindergartens and non-kindergarten ECE services. The graph below gives an example of the 20-hour ECE funding rate changes and the growing gap between what kindergartens and education and care centres on the top funding band receive. (Note that the top funding band of 100% changed to 80%+ in 2011)



Failure to address the growing inequity in funding rates could mean that all the reintroduction of a 100% funding band achieves is to reinforce the present two-tier ECE system, making it harder and harder for non-kindergarten services to compete with kindergartens on teacher salaries and on other structural dimensions of quality.

Moreover, centres with unqualified staff in teaching positions who do not gain a qualification will face employment law challenges unless they have documented performance shortcomings for all their unqualified staff. Unqualified staff will be in ECE for some years, and centres with even one unqualified person in a teaching position within ratios will be unable to access the 100% qualified and certificated rate. This will include any kindergartens who use an office person in a teaching position for lunch cover.

## 5. A Teacher is a Teacher

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### 5.1. Why lower pay is not about gender or work role

The Teaching Council issues practising certificates to teachers who have gained a recognised qualification and who meet its specified standards and professional requirements. Practising certificates are not specific to any particular type of ECE service or school – a teacher is a teacher no matter what part of the education sector they work in according to the Teaching Council.

The proportion of female to male teachers in kindergarten and non-kindergarten ECE services is identical and primary is also female dominated. So, pay differences between the three groups are not about gender.

The work teachers in non-kindergarten ECE do is no less important than the work teachers do in primary schools and it is no different to the work that teachers do in kindergartens. Indeed, it could be argued that teachers in non-kindergarten ECE have a more complex and demanding job as they can be responsible for a wider age range of children.

Early childhood teaching requires a high level of pedagogical knowledge and skill - think about the critical importance of a child's first thousand days of life. All ECE teachers must assess and report on children's learning and fulfil a range of other professional and workplace documentation requirements. In addition, they must meet the physical care and attachment needs of children and work closely with parents and whānau.

### 5.2. Where is NZEI Te Riu Roa on campaigning for pay parity?

The bulk of teachers in primary, secondary and kindergarten are represented by the NZEI union. However, NZEI represents comparatively few teachers in other ECE services.

NZEI cannot be expected to be strongly motivated to offend the bulk of its paid membership by ensuring the large number of non-members in ECE have pay parity extended to them.

NZEI's solution therefore has been to ask teachers in ECE to support its campaign for pay equity (riding on the coat-tails of the Kristine Bartlett and E Tū union aged care workers court case).

As a party to the Early Childhood Education Collective Agreement of Aotearoa New Zealand (ECECA) the NZEI is legally committed to achieving pay parity for qualified teachers. Despite this, it started campaigning for pay equity for qualified and certificated teachers in ECE two years ago.

**Pay equity and parity are like chalk and cheese** – two very different paths to achieving better pay.

The government gave kindergarten teachers pay parity with primary teachers on the merits of a teacher being a teacher; the same qualifications and professional registration and certification standards and processes. To accept anything less for the rest of ECE devalues professionalism as a teacher.

With ECE, the pay difference between kindergarten and other ECE teachers is very clearly not based on gender. The gender balance is identical. Pay equity claims are founded on differences in pay being gender based. In ECE this is clearly not the case. It is not appropriate to go for pay equity for early childhood teachers who are qualified and certificated.

All teachers in all sectors should be worried if a pay equity claim goes forward to the courts, because of the precedent it would set. Once a pay equity claim is resolved, and regardless of its outcome, there would be no turning back and hope for ECE teacher pay parity would basically be muted. **The resolution of the pay equity claim** would be pointed to as the final resolution of the matter.

In regard to NZEI's newest campaign to give all ECE teachers an immediate 11% pay jolt and close the pay gap more information and analysis can be found in these articles:

- [Misleading: NZEI's Claim it Can Deliver an Immediate 11% Pay Increase to All ECE Teachers](#)
- [NZEI's 11% Campaign – It Sounds Great, but What's Inside the Package?](#)

### **5.3. Are kindergartens fundamentally different to other services in ECE?**

In the past, kindergartens had features that made them unique, setting them apart from other childcare and education services. Kindergartens were part of the state education system and were regarded as being exclusively for education and under the control of the Department of Education, while other early childhood services were primarily regarded as being for childcare and were licensed by the Department of Social Welfare. To teach in a kindergarten a person had to undergo a training course at a Teacher's College as did people who wanted to teach in primary or secondary education.

Today however, all early childhood services are under the Ministry of Education and categorised as education services. Teacher training for childcare and kindergarten is completely integrated. All early childhood services share the same curriculum: 'Te Whāriki'.

Several beliefs about what a kindergarten is no longer hold true:

- a. Kindergartens are state services. This is not true – kindergartens are owned by kindergarten associations and are not state-owned public education services. ([learn more](#))
- b. Kindergartens are free and no kindergarten can make parents pay fees. This is no longer true since the law requiring kindergartens to provide a free education for every child was changed on 1 December 2008 to make kindergartens a fee charging service. ([learn more](#))
- c. Kindergartens must meet higher and different standards. This is not the case. The Kindergarten Regulations, 1959 were repealed many years ago. Today all kindergartens and every other teacher-led centre must meet identical standards as set out by the Education (Early Childhood Services) Regulations 2008 and associated Ministry of Education licensing criteria.
- d. Kindergartens are for the education of children for not more than 4 hours a day. This is not true because every kindergarten today is a licensed all-day centre and there are no longer any that are licensed as sessional kindergarten services. ([see the 2017 Open Letter on Kindergarten as we know it being erased](#))
- e. Kindergartens provide pre-school education for children only from 3 years of age. This is not true since kindergartens today provide education and care with many children staying over lunch-times. Due to younger children enrolling, teachers are changing nappies and supervising naps.

Furthermore, Kindergarten Associations no longer exclusively operate kindergartens. Many own home-based services and education and care centres ([read more on the history of changes](#)).

Yet, the Secretary for Education continues to involve herself only in the collective contract negotiations between the NZEI union and kindergarten associations. Why not also other community-based charitable ECE services that are party to a collective contract?

The exclusion of other publicly funded and licensed ECE services on the basis that kindergartens owned by kindergarten associations are unique or part of the state system is unethical, unfair, partial and possibly (as this has yet to be tested in court) legally wrong.

## 6. Summary

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In this booklet we have covered many aspects and questions – including: the causes of low pay today, why simply increasing funding to service providers will not alone translate into pay parity, the danger inherent in NZEI Te Riu Roa’s push for pay ‘equity’ instead of pay ‘parity’, and why and how the government can put things right now.

The problem can be explained very simply as this: an early childhood or primary qualified teacher in a non-kindergarten publicly funded ECE service is treated as deserving of less pay than a teacher in kindergarten or primary – despite doing identical work and meeting the same standards for a practising certificate as set out by the Teaching Council.

Across the country there are many private service providers and community boards who would love to be able to afford to pay their teachers on par with colleagues in kindergarten and primary but are constrained by government funding.

Through low wages teachers are effectively subsidising the full cost of fees and special fees deals to families for services to keep child numbers up and for the government to control its expenditure on ECE.

This is not fair on teachers; many are parents themselves with young children to feed and support. They can find that their pay is not much better or even worse than that of school leavers and people working in unskilled positions, so it is no wonder there is a growing teacher shortage in ECE.

Consider how this is impacting on children. No child should arrive in the morning at their service to find their key teacher or primary caregiver gone due to low pay and not being valued. Dealing with one transition can be hard on a child, dealing with multiple changes in teachers and relieving staff can be even more difficult.

Even when teachers stay in the sector, when they are disillusioned because of poor remuneration and overworked for the pay that they get, they can withdraw and disengage from children and from their work. This is hardly a recipe for effective teaching and providing a nurturing and secure environment for children’s early learning.

As long as the parameters set for teacher pay by the Ministry of Education are below that of the KTCA there will be no improvement. The Ministry of Education must reset its salary attestation rates for all certificated ECE teachers to reflect the remuneration it has agreed to for kindergarten teachers, head teachers and senior teachers in the KTCA.

## 7. Concluding Comment

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We began to prepare this booklet out of concern for the wellbeing of teachers who work in ECE, whom we would expect to be fairly remunerated for their professional skills and qualifications, but the majority are not.

However, in the process of collating information and analysing data it became very clear that the issue of pay parity is very much also about the 153,000 babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers in teacher-led non-kindergarten ECE centres and home-based services. The benefits of early childhood education (ECE) to children - and to society - depend on having a high-quality workforce.

A high-quality well-remunerated workforce is most important in ECE because children in this age group (birth to 5 or 6 years) are learning more and at a faster rate than at any other time. For the wellbeing of children, the slippage in the quality of ECE for children is something that the government cannot afford, and it needs to put things right, starting with extending equality of remuneration to teachers in all ECE services.

ECE teacher pay parity is also something that concerns business and our economy. To engage in paid work, parents need to be able to have peace of mind that their child will be well-cared for and educated.

The headlines that the government will get out of extending pay parity to teachers in all ECE services will be worth far more in establishing NZ's international reputation as a world leader in ECE than the cost of implementing pay parity. Showing that NZ:

- has taken the final step to integrating care and education for its youngest children and no longer has a 2-tier system (schools and kindergartens and below this all other ECE 'care' services), and
- is prepared extend equality of remuneration to all teachers in ECE because it recognises that having a high-quality ECE workforce is critical for children – and for society.

The responsibility is on this government to halt the Cinderella like treatment of teachers who work in ECE and make sure they are given the professional respect and pay they deserve. Now is the opportunity for the government to fulfil pre-election promises to fund ECE appropriately.

Both Labour and the Greens were clear that ECE teachers should be fairly remunerated. If those promises are not delivered on now, then which promises should we believe at the next election?



## APPENDICES

### 1. Salary attestation rates

Below are the salary attestation rates set by the Ministry of Education for all teachers holding a practising certificate in teacher-led centres. Note that there are no further steps and no recognition for senior positions and additional responsibilities.

QUALIFICATION GROUP NOTATIONS	FROM 1/8/2019
Q1 & Q2, & Q3 All teachers with a recognised teaching qualification diploma/degree who hold a current practising certificate	\$45,491 (or \$21.87 hour)
Q3+ All teachers who hold a current practising certificate and a higher level of teaching qualification such as 4 year-degree, honours degree in teaching or a bachelors degree together with a recognised ECE qualification	\$46,832 (or \$22.51 hour)

### 2. Pay parity rates

Note that pay parity for all ECE teachers can be achieved by the Ministry of Education replacing the current salary attestation rates (as shown in Appendix 1 above), with the unified base salary scale and rates it has agreed to for kindergarten head teachers and senior teachers (see below).

#### Unified base salary scale for trained teachers

STEP	QUAL. NOTATIONS	FROM 12/7/2019	STEP	QUAL. NOTATIONS	FROM 12/7/2020	FROM 12/7/2021
1	P1E, P2E, P3E all teachers who hold a current practising certificate	\$48,410	1	P1E, P2E, P3E	\$49,862	\$51,358
2		\$50,470	2		\$51,984	\$53,544
3	P3+E Also hold a subject or specialist qualification at level 7 or an honours degree	\$52,736	3	P3+E	\$54,318	\$55,948
4	P4E Also hold 2 subject or specialist qualifications at level 7 (e.g. a grad diploma) or level 8	\$54,796	4	P4E	\$56,440	\$58,133

	qualification or a masters degree of teaching					
5	P5E Also hold subject or specialist level 9 qualification or masters or doctorate	\$58,247	5	P5E	\$59,994	\$61,794
6	P1M	\$62,000	6		\$63,860	\$65,776
7	P2M	\$66,100	7		\$68,000	\$70,040
8		\$71,000	8		\$73,000	\$75,190
9	P3M	\$75,200	9		\$77,100	\$79,413
10	P3+M, P4M, P5M	\$80,500	10	P1M, P2M, P3M	\$83,000	\$85,490
			11	P3+M, P4M, P5M	\$87,000	\$90,000

### Head teacher kindergarten rates

	From 12/7/2019	From 12/7/2020	From 12/7/2021
Head teacher rate if relieving for a period of less than 10 weeks or in acting positions	\$82,632	\$89,111	\$92,175
Head teacher rate if permanent or relieving at least 10 weeks	\$84,632	\$91,111	\$94,175

### Senior teacher kindergarten rates

	From 12/7/2019	From 12/7/2020	From 12/7/2021
K3 (benchmarked salary to a U2 Primary School principal)	\$93,625	\$96,434	\$99,327
K4 (benchmarked salary to a U3 Primary School principal)	\$101,583	\$104,631	107,770

## 3. Kindergarten teacher working conditions

However, the Ministry of Education agrees that full-time teachers in kindergarten can have 6 weeks paid annual leave and a minimum entitlement of 9 days paid sick leave. In addition to the minimum entitlement additional leave may be granted according to a teacher's period of service/ employment. This is greater than the minimum under NZ employment law of 4 weeks paid annual leave and 5 days sick leave.

Further benefits provided to teachers in kindergartens include:

- Meal allowance if attending a meeting prevents the teacher from returning home for an evening meal.
- Reimbursement of actual and reasonable expenses incurred in attending work-related courses and training, including professional development and first-aid training.
- Maximum child-contact time of 30 hours for a teacher employed 40 hours if the kindergarten is open less than 32.5 hours per week. Or maximum child-contact time of 35 hours for a teacher employed 40 hours if the kindergarten is open more than 32.5 hours per week.
- Teachers continue to be paid during school term breaks when they are not required for duties connected to their employment.
- Minimum professional time of three ordinary weeks when the kindergarten is closed or open for instruction, if the kindergarten is open for less than 32.5 hours per week. Or minimum professional time of 7 days per year if the kindergarten is open more than 32.5 hours per week.

#### 4. Current funding rates by service type

The tables below show that the funding rates for kindergartens are higher than for every other service type. This is because kindergarten funding rates contain a salary component to assist employers in meeting of the cost of teachers' salaries (see appendices 2 & 3). All services have been promised a funding increase from 1 January 2020. Only kindergartens will be getting additional scheduled funding increases to support the cost of teacher wages for pay parity (see below).

##### Kindergarten funding rates

\$ PER FUNDED CHILD HOUR (INCL. GST)	RATES FROM 1/7/2019			RATES FROM 1/1/2020		
	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE
80%+ certificated teachers	\$13.48	\$7.51	\$12.71	\$13.71	\$7.64	\$12.93
50-79% certificated teachers	\$12.19	\$6.46	\$11.57	\$12.40	\$6.57	\$11.77
25-49% certificated teachers	\$9.79	\$5.13	\$10.11	\$9.96	\$5.22	\$10.29
0-24% certificated teachers	\$8.33	\$4.23	\$9.19	\$8.48	\$4.30	\$9.35

**... continued kindergarten funding rates**

\$ PER FUNDED CHILD HOUR (INCL. GST)	RATES FROM 1/7/2020			RATES FROM 1//7/2021		
	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE
80%+ certificated teachers	\$14.38	\$8.01	\$13.56	\$14.76	\$8.22	\$13.92
50-79% certificated teachers	\$13.00	\$6.89	\$12.34	\$13.34	\$7.07	\$12.66
25-49% certificated teachers	\$10.45	\$5.47	\$10.79	\$10.72	\$5.61	\$11.07
0-24% certificated teachers	\$8.89	\$4.51	\$9.81	\$9.12	\$4.63	\$10.07

**All other teacher-led centres (education and care centres all-day)**

\$ PER FUNDED CHILD HOUR (INCL. GST)	RATES FROM 1/1/2019			RATES FROM 1/1/2020		
	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE
80%+ certificated teachers	\$12.31	\$6.81	\$11.61	\$12.53	\$6.93	\$11.82
50-79% certificated teachers	\$11.15	\$5.87	\$10.58	\$11.35	\$5.98	\$10.77
25-49% certificated teachers	\$9.00	\$4.68	\$9.30	\$9.16	\$4.76	\$9.47
0-24% certificated teachers	\$7.69	\$3.89	\$8.47	\$7.83	\$3.96	\$8.62

### Homebased Teacher-Led ECE Service funding rates

Home-based services are required to employ a person responsible/ coordinator for every 50 children who is qualified and holds a current practising certificate. A service licensed for 51 children must have 2 qualified and certificated teachers.

TEACHER-LED HOMEBASED SERVICES \$ PER FUNDED CHILD HOUR (INCL. GST)	RATES FROM 1/1/2019			RATES FROM 1/1/2020		
	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE
Quality	\$8.44	\$4.52	\$9.42	\$8.59	\$4.60	\$9.59
Standard	\$7.28	\$3.94	\$8.76	\$7.28	\$3.94	\$8.76

### Te Kōhanga Reo funding rates

To support teachers, the Trust advocates for Te Tohu Tino Rangatiratanga Whakapakari o Te Kōhanga Reo - a Level 7 qualification delivered in te reo - to be recognised as a qualification accepted by the Teaching Council for graduates to register and gain a practising certificate. The majority of staff in Kōhanga Reo are currently undertaking a Kōhanga Reo course or hold some type of Kōhanga Reo approved course qualification.

\$ PER FUNDED CHILD HOUR (INCL. GST)	RATES FROM 1/7/2019			RATES FROM 1/1/2020		
	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE
Quality	\$11.29	\$6.82	\$10.74	\$11.45	\$6.90	\$10.89
Standard	\$10.17	\$6.27	\$10.26	\$10.31	\$6.34	\$10.40

### Playcentre funding rates

All Playcentres are required to have a person responsible and that person may hold a Level 4 early childhood qualification on the NZQA framework or a teaching diploma or degree and a practising certificate

\$ PER FUNDED CHILD HOUR (INC. GST)	RATES FROM 1/1/2019			RATES FROM 1/1/2020		
	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE	UNDER 2	2 AND OVER	20 HOURS ECE
Quality	\$8.98	\$4.51	\$5.61	\$9.14	\$4.59	\$5.71
Standard	\$7.86	\$3.96	\$5.04	\$8.00	\$4.03	\$5.13

## 5. Glossary

**Certificated teacher** means a qualified teacher who has been granted a practising certificate by the Teaching Council. All qualified teachers, whether primary, early childhood or secondary trained are required by the Teaching Council to meet the same standards and criteria to be awarded and maintain their practising certificate status.

**Free Kindergarten** means an early childhood education and care centre controlled by a free kindergarten association. A free kindergarten is an early childhood service whose licence permits no child to attend for a period of more than 4 hours on any day (Education Act, 1989 s348).

**Free Kindergarten Association** means – (not defined in current legislation).

**Licensed early childhood service** means a free kindergarten that is an early childhood service whose licence permits no child to attend for a period of more than 4 hours on any day (Education Act, 1989 s348); and any other early childhood service in respect of which the service provider holds a current licence issued under regulations (s317)

**Publicly-funded early childhood service** means a recognised service (Education Act 1989 s 317) that receives government subsidies for children and/or any operating grants from public funds. Such services include for example, Playcentre, Free Kindergarten and all education and care centres, Nga Kohanga Reo, and Home-based ECE.

**Recognised qualification** means in relation to a licensed service that is teacher led, an early childhood teaching qualification recognised by the Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand for registration purposes (namely: Bachelor of Teaching (ECE), Diploma of Teaching (ECE), or an equivalent early childhood teaching qualification). A primary trained teacher can count as qualified in an early childhood service to meet adult-child ratio requirements and for funding purposes, but the law specifies that only a person holding a recognised qualification in early childhood teaching can act as the ‘person responsible’ or in charge.

**Teacher-led service** means a service in which parents are not responsible for their child’s education and the service licence requires the person responsible to be a certificated teacher who holds a recognised ECE qualification.

**Teaching position** means a position that requires the holder to instruct students or is the professional leader of an early childhood service (Education Act 1989 s 348).