MINISTRY OF EDUCATION NEW ZEALAND
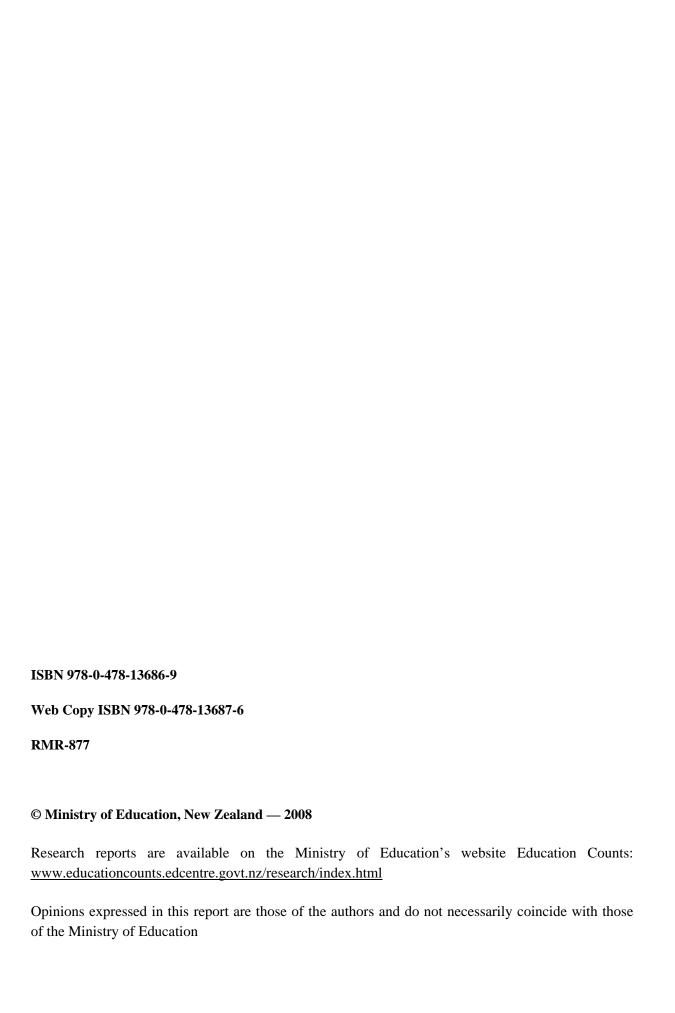Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga Aotearoa

Locality-based evaluation of *Pathways to the Future — Ngā Huarahi Arataki*

Stage 1 Baseline report

Report to the Ministry of Education
Linda Mitchell, Arapera Royal Tangaere,
Diane Mara & Cathy Wylie

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NZCER and TKRNT

NEW ZEALAND COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH
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WELLINGTON

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Executive summary

The locality-based longitudinal evaluation of *Pathways to the Future – Ngā Huarahi Arataki*, the strategic plan for early childhood education, is one part of the Ministry of Education's wider evaluation strategy. The strategy also includes development of a monitoring system designed to provide indicators of progress and identify emerging problems, and targeted evaluations that both contribute to the overall evaluative picture and inform decisions about individual initiatives.

This first phase of the evaluation covers only the initial stages of the long-term strategic plan. The most important aspect of this phase of the evaluation is to provide a baseline picture of how things were in mid-2004 before the major policy changes began, so that when we return to the same early childhood education services in 2006, we can map the changes that occur in services and for parents between 2004 and 2006. This comparison will provide some insight into how change occurred, and whether it is heading as expected against the participation, quality and collaborative relationship goals of *Pathways to the Future – Ngā Huarahi Arataki*.

The eight localities for the study were chosen by the Ministry of Education and researchers to provide diversity on key relevant variables of geographical location, ethnic composition, demographic changes anticipated, Early Childhood Education (ECE) service supply and demand and range of ECE services. All had individual incomes below the median. Electoral wards were used as a systematic way to define locality boundaries.

This report provides a description of the eight localities and early childhood education services in them in mid-2004. These descriptions provide some 'snapshots' of how different services actually work, and what is important to them and the people who use them. This information should have a use for the early childhood education sector, particularly in relation to professional development, support for individual services, and needs analysis in both areas and services.

In this baseline phase, data was collected from four sources:

- community meetings held in each locality mainly to inform communities about the study;

- at a sample of individual services of different types in each locality, through gathering information about operation and practice, a parent survey, management interview, teacher/educator interview, and observations of aspects of adult interactions with children, children's interactions with each other, and the education programme that contribute to the learning environment and outcomes for children. A total of 46 services in all the localities combined formed this sample;

- discussion and interviews with Ministry of Education (MOE) regional staff in August 2004 and April 2005 about actions regional MOE staff are taking with respect to the strategic plan and their views of implementation issues;

- MOE data on participation, provision and staffing for each locality.

Patterns at a locality level showed wide variations by locality of types of service available and the number of weeks open per year. MOE data provided baseline information about staff qualifications against which to track progress to meeting qualification targets.

Information on participation showed most children were enrolled for less than the 20 hours per week that will be offered free to 3- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led services in 2007. But the group most likely to be waiting for a place was aged three, suggesting further pressure may occur with free provision for this age group. There was some irregular attendance and variable levels of attendance linked to socio-economic status of locality and ethnicity of children—this has implications for children's learning opportunities, and for a service's sustainability since MOE funding is tied to attendance.

- Two-thirds of children were enrolled in ECE for less than 21 hours a week.

- Eighty percent were attending regularly.

- Attendance was lowest in low socio-economic localities.

- Eighty-four percent were said by their parents to have had some ECE attendance when they started school.

- Attendance was higher for European/Pākehā children, and lowest for Māori, Pacific and children of other ethnicities.

- The age group most likely to be waiting for a place was aged 3 years.

Eight hundred and eight-six parents from the eight localities completed the parent survey. They provided information about their child's attendance patterns and their views, their reasons for going to an ECE service, and views of how well their ECE service met their needs.

Key findings that are relevant to the strategic plan and are important to consider in respect to the types of provision available locally and the goal of parents valuing ECE were:

- There was a high incidence of dual enrolment, peaking at 23 percent at age four years.

- Children attending kōhanga reo and Pasifika centres were more likely to attend only one service. The role of these services in supporting language and culture is a clear purpose that makes them distinct.

- Parents of children attending Pasifika centres had the widest range of expectations that their centre would meet parental needs. Cost was one of these.

- Parents of children attending playcentre were less likely to think that their service was meeting their needs very well. Playcentres were under pressure from a high volunteer workload, ongoing turnover of parents and difficulty in attracting parents to undertake higher levels of playcentre training.

- The main locality differences in parental views were related to parental employment, rather than any different values that parents in different localities placed on ECE in relation to children's development.

We developed indicators from data gathered for sample services to tell us how well a particular ECE service was achieving a strategic plan goal or target. This provides a baseline against which to analyse change in 2006, and information about where there are pressures for services and localities, and enables analysis of relationships between indicators.

Our analysis shows quality in the sample services was generally at a medium level, but with considerable variability between services. Understanding and use of Te Whāriki, and strength of assessment, planning and evaluation, and self review were also variable. There were relationships between:

- some indicators of strategic plan targets (teacher qualifications, professional support, leadership support, collaborative relationships with schools and ECE services for mutual support); and

- outcomes intended to promote quality teaching and learning processes (strength of use and understanding of Te Whāriki, assessment, planning and evaluation, and self review);

- and overall ratings of process quality.

Strength of collaborative relationships was largely dependent on willingness of individual services to make connections, and those services to reciprocate. While participants were positive about developing linkages with parents in the interests of children's learning, and with schools to support transition, only some ECE services were keen to foster professional linkages and share information and resources with other ECE services, although benefits seemed to occur when these relationships were formed. And while there was a desire for most services to have greater connections with Māori and iwi (except kōhanga reo where these were strong) and with Pacific communities (except Pasifika ECE services where these were strong), there was often little confidence about how to go about approaching this.

It is too early to judge the initial impact of the strategic plan. The purpose of this report is to provide a picture of the ECE context prior to the mid-2004 policy changes as a baseline for comparison and, as such, it is primarily descriptive. It is too early in the early evaluation to assess the initial impact of the strategic plan and subsequent evaluation reports will provide an analysis of the impact of the plan. However, in the final section, we include our thoughts about some issues and pressures raised by the evaluation findings, that the MOE and the ECE sector may find useful to consider.

1 Introduction

Pathways to the Future – Ngā Huarahi Arataki

Pathways to the Future - Ngā Huarahi Arataki is an innovative approach to strengthening education. This is the first long-term strategic plan for any education sector. It was developed through extensive consultation with the early childhood education sector, within a framework of increasing participation, improving quality, and promoting collaborative relationships. The first two goals are also explicitly connected in the outline of the strategic plan:

> *Government's vision is for all New Zealand children to have the opportunity to participate in quality early childhood education no matter their circumstances. (Ministry of Education 2002, p.1)*

This strategic plan is aspirational for both the Early Childhood Education (ECE) sector and government. It is accompanied by significant increases in government funding and support. The main strategies as outlined in 2002 are:

To increase participation

- Focus on communities where participation is low, particularly Māori, Pasifika, low socio-economic and rural communities;

- Be driven by the needs of those individual communities;

- Increase the Government's role in facilitating access to diverse services; and

- Support ECE services to be more responsive to the needs of children, parents, families, and whānau.

To improve quality

- Implement the curriculum (Te Whāriki) effectively;

- Ensure teachers, ratios and group size support quality;

- Provide for quality interactions between teachers/parents and whānau and children;

- Establish and reflect on quality practices in teaching and learning.

To improve collaborative relationships

- Improve the development and educational achievement of children between birth and age eight through forming strong links between ECE services, parent support and development, schools, health and social services.

The 2002 outline of the strategy contained specific goals within these strategies, and noted that the strategy would be implemented in steps. Among the first steps in 2003 was a review of the ECE funding system, followed by a review of the ECE regulations. The May 2004 Government budget announced increased spending of $307 million over the next four years, including increased funding for services, using cost-drivers based formulae, a top-up for rural services, a professional development programme to support the effective use of the Assessment for Learning

exemplars, and an entitlement of 20 hours free education a week for 3- and 4-year-old children attending teacher-led community-owned[1] ECE services. Childcare subsidies were also increased from October 2004. An update on progress on the strategic plan as at September 2004, when the baseline fieldwork for this evaluation was under way, is given as Appendix 1.

The strategic plan also included "longitudinal research [to] measure the progress of implementation against the three goals as the plan unfolds" (p.3). This locality-based longitudinal evaluation of *Pathways to the Future – Ngā Huarahi Arataki*, the strategic plan for early childhood education, is one part of the Ministry of Education's wider evaluation strategy. The strategy also includes development of a monitoring system designed to provide indicators of progress and identify emerging problems, and targeted evaluations that both contribute to the overall evaluative picture and inform decisions about individual initiatives. The Ministry of Education is also undertaking analysis of the annual information it receives from ECE centres, and commissioning other evaluations of specific initiatives or changes to funding (e.g. of the initial impact of Equity Funding,[2] and the Centres of Innovation[3]), and an analysis of the financial sustainability of services, linked to and using some data from this study.

As well as measuring progress, the evaluation is intended to provide insight into how the three goals are met, such as the actions services take in response to the new resources coming from the strategic plan that enable improved participation and quality, and the factors that influence these actions. Such insight can help the Ministry of Education policymakers and people supporting ECE services around the country, as well as people working in individual services. It may lead to the identification of aspects that need more support than originally realised, or changes in emphasis, for example, if one part of the strategic plan appears to be occurring at the expense of another.

Locality-based evaluation

One of the major factors that could influence the actions people take, and how the strategic plan actually unfolds for children, parents, teacher/educators, and managers, is the locality in which families live, work, and use ECE. It was for this reason that the Ministry of Education decided to call for tenders to undertake evaluation on the impact of the strategic plan that would pay attention to differences in local context, and shed some light on what these differences mean for the way the strategic plan takes shape over time.

NZCER and Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, together with Health Outcomes International, which is focusing on ECE service sustainability both in localities and nationally, were selected to undertake the first phase of this locality-based evaluation. Like the *Pathways to the Future* strategic plan, the evaluation is occurring in steps. We started with several meetings in late 2003, when the evaluation team and Ministry of Education ECE

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[1]   The "20 hours free ECE" policy was extended to all teacher-led services, including privately owned services, in the Government Budget, 18 May 2006, after data for this phase was collected.

[2]   Equity Funding was first implemented in early 2002, and provides some additional funding for services operating in low socio-economic communities, rural communities, who provide immersion programmes, and cater for children with low to moderate special needs, or for whom English is a second language.

[3]   Centres of Innovation is a contestable programme that funds ECE services to undertake or extend innovative work, and document its effects, working with researchers.

policymakers, researchers, and data-analysts discussed the intervention logic model[4] that had been developed for the Ministry of Education to show the likely paths between the outcomes at the end of the ten-year period, the goals of the strategic plan, and intermediate outcomes that would occur along the way. The final version of this model is given at the end of this introduction. The model framed the information that we needed to collect, particularly in relation to the intermediate outcomes. We also discussed the kinds of changes that were likely to occur as a result of the strategic plan, the factors within, and outside, the strategic plan that were likely to influence outcomes, and risks that could affect the achievement of the outcomes. For example, in relation to increasing participation of Māori children, some of the factors within the strategic plan were teacher skills and supply, supply of services Māori parents wanted, and alignment of policy; factors outside it included labour market factors, housing, income support and social development policy, the degree and quality of parent/whānau engagement in ECE, and children's health; and risks included services not being accessible or affordable. This analysis also mapped out the information that should be gathered through the evaluation.

This first phase of the evaluation covers only the initial stages of the long-term strategic plan. The most important aspect of this phase of the evaluation is to provide a baseline picture of how things were in mid-2004 before the major policy changes began, so that when we return to the same early childhood education services in 2006, we can map the changes that occur in services and for parents between 2004 and 2006. This comparison will provide some insight into how change occurred, and whether it is heading as expected by the intervention logic model that underpins *Pathways to the Future – Ngā Huarahi Arataki*. Because it is important to understand how change occurs (or does not), this study focuses on a sample of individual services, so that we can both track things over time, and have contextual information that will allow us to gain that understanding. This study is not intended to provide a representative picture of all ECE services. That can be provided by analysis of the national data collected by the Ministry of Education, and by periodic national surveys, such as the 2003 NZCER national survey of early childhood education services[5].

Much information was gathered to provide a detailed baseline picture, reflecting the wide-ranging nature of the ECE strategic plan.

In this report, we summarise where these eight localities and 46 services were in relation to the intermediate outcomes of the three goals of *Pathways to the Future - Ngā Huarahi Arataki*. To do this, we have used the strategic plan's intermediate outcomes and the discussions around the intervention logic model to develop a set of indicators around each of the plan's three major goals:

- increasing participation;

- improving quality; and

- promoting collaborative relationships

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[4] The intervention logic model was developed by Patricia Rogers, RMIT University, Melbourne, from documentation and discussions with the long-term strategic plan working group, and Ministry of Education policy and research staff. In essence, an intervention model shows how something is expected to work, and allows people to test their assumptions and clarify understanding both in the policy development stage, and as a policy unfolds. It is a living model, rather than an inflexible test of whether something is 'correct'.

[5] The NZCER national survey carried out in late 2003 surveyed management, teacher/educators, parents, and parent committee members from 531 early childhood education services. This sample was approximately 15 percent of all service types, except kōhanga reo. It is the first comprehensive national survey of its kind of licensed early childhood education services in New Zealand. It provides a baseline picture of the situation for these services at the beginning of the implementation of the strategic plan. A report on the survey was published in 2007.

We then provide some analysis of the factors that may make a difference in relation to the achievement of the strategic plan's outcomes. Locality is the first of these. We have compared the eight localities as such, and then analysed three main characteristics of the localities that could affect the outcomes: whether they are rural or urban, low socio-economic or not, and whether population is increasing, declining, or stable.

Service characteristics may also affect the changes that occur in relation to the strategic plan. We have compared services in relation to their type, whether they are sessional or full-day, the proportion of under-twos on their roll, and in terms of the social characteristics of their roll (the proportion of Māori, proportion of Pacific, and their Equity Funding index (indicating low socio-economic status).

We surveyed parents at each of the 46 services in the study, a total of 886. This is a sizeable cross-section of ECE users, and provides useful information not just about these services in relation to the strategic plan goals, but also about patterns of children's participation in ECE that may have some implications for the implementation of the strategic plan. An overview of parent perspectives is therefore also included in this report, with an analysis of any differences we found related to locality and service type.

The report starts with an outline of the methodology used. Chapter 3 gives an overview of the ward contexts, using quantitative data, in relation to the strategic plan's goals of improved provision, participation, and collaborative relationships. Chapter 4 summarises each of the eight localities in relation to the strategic plan intermediate outcomes and main goals. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the factors that may affect the indicators of progress towards these outcomes and goals. Chapter 6 describes parent perspectives on the ECE services. Finally, we draw these different vantage points together to suggest what they may mean for the likely impact of the strategic plan in the study localities, and nationally.

This report provides a description of the eight localities and early childhood education services in them in mid-2004. These descriptions provide some 'snapshots' of how different services actually work, and what is important to them and the people who use them. The scope of the evaluation means that this baseline report is likely to be of interest not only to the Ministry of Education but to the early childhood education sector, particularly in relation to professional development, support for individual services, and needs analysis in both areas and services.

Framework for the evaluation of 'Pathways to the Future'

Government social, labour market, economic, health immigration, education...policies

Demographic changes

Community resources, services, cultures, languages, relationships...

"Children develop an understanding of what it means to live both locally and globally as Māori or as one of the many cultures of New Zealand.

This is inclusive of opportunities to help all access te ao Māori, the Māori world, as well as the many Pasifika, European and Asian cultures present in New Zealand today.

Ultimate outcomes

Increased community capacity to engage in other community activities

Children develop and enhance strong early learning foundations, including building a strong sense of identity.

Parents and whānau are strengthened and empowered to play a significant role in their children's early education and development

Parents can engage in education, training and employment if they choose

Strategic Plan goals

Increased participation in quality ECE Special focus on Māori children, Pasifika children & children in low socio-economic and rural communities

Improved quality of ECE Quality teaching Quality services

Collaborative relationships between
• ECE and families/whānau
• ECE and schools
• ECE & other family services

Integrated services 0–8 years

Coherence of education 0–8 years

Parents can identify quality in ECE

Increased participation in ECE

Intermediate outcomes

Parents value ECE

ECE services are accessible

ECE services are sustainable

ECE services are responsive

Services meet cultural & language aspirations

Quality in parent led services

Te Whāriki effectively implement ed

Quality teaching & learning practices

Reduced ratios and group size

More registered teachers in ECE

Outputs

Actions

r – i – s – k

2 Methodology

Purpose of evaluation

In its outline of what it wanted from the evaluation, the Ministry of Education noted that

> *some aspects of the implementation of* Pathways to the Future *will be different in different contexts because needs and issues are different in different places. Consequently, the outcomes of* Pathways to the Future *may differ in different contexts.*

These contexts included geographical location, government policy context, demographic, community, and family/whānau. The purpose of the case-studies was to:

- put our understanding of how *Pathways to the Future - Ngā Huarahi Arataki* works into context;

- add depth to our understanding of how the elements of *Pathways to the Future - Ngā Huarahi Arataki* interact; and

- provide an early warning on problems that may be arising during the implementation period 2003–2006.

The objectives for the first stage of the evaluation are:

Within specified locations, over the period 2003–2006:[6]

a) To establish baseline measures in 2004 related to the stated goals;

b) To describe the implementation process and the impact of the implementation;

c) To determine whether there is any change from baseline measures in 2006;

d) To analyse the evidence from each locality to understand, with respect to the stated goals and the logic model:

- what is working so far, and why
- what is not working so far, and why.

e) To analyse similarities and differences in relation to what works in different contexts; and

f) To provide evidence of any unintended outcomes that may arise from the implementation to date.

This report provides information for objective *a*, and analysis in relation to objectives *d*, and *e*. The next report, after fieldwork in early 2006 in the same localities, with the same services, will address objectives *b-f*.

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[6]   The evaluation began on 1 March 2004, and 2004 is the baseline year for tracking change.

Evaluation design

The evaluation design for this evaluation had to provide ways to gather meaningful information relevant to the strategic plan goals and outcomes that could be tracked over time, to see what changes were occurring in ECE services and for parents. It also needed to be able to relate any changes found to both the national level (e.g. changes to funding or regulations), and the local context. The local context included other ECE services, on the underlying assumption that the diversity of the ECE sector and its relative openness to new providers would have a bearing on participation and quality in any given locality. Neighbouring services are to some degree in competition with each other, and can have some influence on each other's roll numbers and composition. For example, in an area where a Pasifika service opens, existing services may lose Pacific children; where one service offering a similar programme or hours costs parents less than another, it may mean that others nearby lose children. If parents perceive kindergarten to be an essential step to starting school, other services may lose children when the kindergarten can take them, or find that formerly full-time attendees want to access their service only part-time. Changes in roll numbers or composition may lead to changes in practice that affect quality.

The locality-based focus of the evaluation provides a useful framework for gathering relevant data, and for much of the analysis. But it is not without some limitations. Ideally, the definition of a locality would encompass a bounded setting within which families live, work, and use only the ECE services found within it. This would enable us to narrow down the factors that could be influencing the kinds of change occurring in relation to the strategic plan. However, that is not how things are in contemporary New Zealand. While many families use ECE services that are within reach of their homes, others may live in one area, and use an ECE service—or services—in another, depending on factors such as their employment, family/whānau support, and the location of an ECE service they want to use. This means some caution is needed in interpreting changes in individual ECE services simply in relation to the immediate locality, and the services in it. An evaluation that gathered in-depth data on all the ECE services in a wider area that were likely to be used by families would also be ideal, but very expensive.

When it comes to interpreting the social and demographic contexts of a set of ECE services that are geographically close, the wider worlds in which families operate also need to be taken into account. Ideally again, a study like this would be able to gather or have access to current relevant social and demographic information for both the specific locality itself, and the area around it, to understand factors outside the ECE services and the strategic plan that may affect what we see changing in the ECE services. In designing the study, we thought of interviews with the relevant local body and government offices to see what trends were occurring, and what effect they might be having—such as the closure or opening of a major employment source, or shifts in housing availability and affordability. This was too costly; and so we are reliant on Census data taken only every five years. This gives information on some demographic characteristics, but not social trends that may be affecting families' needs.

We are limited in what we can chart in terms of participation. We can track changes in regularity of attendance, and number of hours, but we cannot tell what proportion of a locality's preschoolers are accessing the ECE services in that locality, because no current information on the number of preschoolers in a given area is available. Schools provide the Ministry of Education with information provided by parents about whether their new entrant child has attended ECE, and the type, which gives some indication for the ECE attendance of children just before they come to school. But it cannot tell us whether this ECE attendance was in the same locality, or about the ECE attendance patterns of younger children.

Intervention logic is often used to evaluate programmes with defined beginnings and ends, and to map out the ways in which progress towards a defined end is expected to occur. The intervention logic model used for the *Pathways to the Future - Ngā Huarahi Arataki* strategic plan is at a high level, relating goals to outcomes over time. These outcomes and goals are directional and are not defined in terms of quantitative targets (e.g. 100 percent ECE attendance for all 4-year-olds, or 75 percent of all services achieving high ratings for the quality of teacher/educator:child interaction, by 2012). Only some aspects that fall within regulations have been given clear targets, such as having all teacher/educators in teacher-led programmes registered by 2012.

Progress towards the outcomes and goals of the strategic plan is measured here in terms of the main strategies set out on page 1 of this report. These strategies can be thought of as the underlying assumptions about how the increased support for ECE would translate into action, and the kinds of action that would gradually improve participation, quality, and collaborative relationships. We have used these strategies as the basis for forming the sets of indicators that allow us to track change over time. Other information collected at the service and locality levels will then enable us to see what may be contributing to any changes seen.

Sample

The eight localities for the study were chosen by the Ministry of Education, NZCER and Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust to provide diversity on key relevant variables. These were:

- geographical location, including North or South Island and different degrees of isolation;

- ethnic composition, especially percentage of Māori population and percentage of Pacific population;

- demographic changes anticipated, especially projected under-five population growth or decline;

- ECE service supply and demand; and

- range of ECE services (e.g. licensed, licence-exempt, different ownership structures, different service types, different philosophies, different language and culture provision, and special character services).

All the wards selected have individual incomes below the median.

Electoral wards were used as a systematic way to define locality boundaries. Electoral wards are subsets of City Districts (previously Territorial Local Authorities). Statistics New Zealand notes that "the ward system was designed to allow for the recognition of communities within a district and to increase overall community involvement in the local government system" (Statistics New Zealand, 2005b). Boundaries are reviewed preceding local body elections. Wards are therefore already defined localities that should have coherence as communities.

While the wards provided a way to define localities that were likely to operate as communities for electoral purposes, the case study approach focusing on reasonably comprehensive data collection from individual ECE services meant that wards were too big to be able to include every ECE service. Census Area Unit/Units (CAUs) were used within each ward to define the geographic area for the ECE services to be followed over time. CAUs usually coincide with suburbs or parts of suburbs, thus allowing a closely defined geographical area to be intensively studied within the setting of a broader community. The following chart sets out some key social characteristics of the 8 localities chosen.

Table 1: **Characteristics of the 8 localities (2001 Census data)**

Kauri	Ethnicity of population: 70% Māori, 5% Pasifika
	ECE participation- relatively low
	Median income: $13,100
	Unemployment rate: 18.7%
	Locality: North Island, minor urban
Pohutakawa	Ethnicity of population: 20% Māori, 45% Pasifika
	Site for Promoting Participation Project
	Median income: $14,500
	Unemployment rate: 13.4%
	Locality: North Island, main urban
Kowhai	Ethnicity of population: 26% Māori, 15% Pasifika
	Site for Promoting Participation Project, property provision likely
	Median income: $17,200
	Unemployment rate: 11.8%
	Locality: North Island, main urban
Karaka	Ethnicity of population: 24% Māori, 2.2% Pasifika
	Median income: $17,600
	Unemployment rate: 5.7%
	Locality: North Island, minor urban
Totara	Ethnicity of population: 31% Māori, 3.1% Pasifika
	Local wananga
	Median income: $14,000
	Unemployment rate: 10.2%
	Locality: North Island, minor urban
Nikau	Ethnicity of population: 5.5% Māori, 0.5% Pasifika
	High participation, increasing school rolls, high demand
	Median income: $16,800
	Unemployment rate: 4.3%
	Locality: South Island, main urban
Rata	Ethnicity of population: 9.6% Māori, 3.9% Pasifika, % other
	Median income: $17,200
	Unemployment rate: 8.4%
	Locality: South Island, main urban
Rimu	Ethnicity of population: 11.2% Māori, 0.7% Pasifika
	Median income: $17,300
	Unemployment rate: 3.9%
	Locality: South Island, secondary urban

Median individual income for all of New Zealand is $18,500. Unemployment rate for all of New Zealand is 7.5%

Main urban areas have minimum population of 30,000 and are centred on a city or major urban area.

Secondary urban areas have a population between 10,000 and 29,999 and are centred on the larger regional areas. Minor urban areas are urbanised settlements (outside main and secondary urban areas) centred around smaller towns with a population of 1,000 to 9,999. Rural centres have population of 300–999. (Source: (Statistics New Zealand, 2005a).

We aimed to sample one of each service type that occurred within each chosen locality. Across all localities the original sample comprised 49 services: 8 kindergartens, 4 community ECE services, 7 private ECE services, 8 playcentres, 4 Pasifika ECE services, 3 homebased, 1 Early intervention ECE service, 1 playgroup (general), 1 punanga, 2 Māori immersion ECS, 9 kōhanga reo, 1 puna kōhungahunga.

Services were approached by letter and telephone, and any who did not want to participate were replaced by a service with the same characteristics within the locality, or very close to it. Where there were no other ECE services of that type, we did not select a replacement, because of the locality framework being used.

Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust used its connections with whānau to approach the kōhanga reo chosen for its sample. NZCER researchers approached the other services.

Most services approached in this way agreed to take part. Some private centre managers said they were reluctant to participate in the evaluation since they thought the government policy of 20 hours free ECE only for teacher-led community-owned[7] services was discriminatory and could discourage parents from participating in private centres. While agreeing to participate, some were reluctant to provide their accounts. The early intervention centre was too busy to participate initially because it was preparing for an ERO visit and working on an Ministry of Education (MOE) contract, but agreed to take part from the beginning of 2005.

The proposed sample was reduced by two Māori immersion centres and one kōhanga reo, with MOE agreement. The TKRNT researcher attended the management meeting of one of the Māori immersion centres, provided information, and made telephone calls, but the owner would not make a decision and after 10 weeks, the MOE agreed that we would not pursue this any further. The second Māori immersion centre did agree to take part, but then withdrew because of work pressure. One kōhanga reo approached had personnel problems and declined to take part. As it was an extra kōhanga reo for the locality, it was not replaced.

In total, 12 education and care services (seven private and five community-owned), eight kindergartens, eight kōhanga reo, and eight playcentres are taking part in the study. There are at least one of each of these main types in each locality. Of the other service types, five Pasifika services (from three localities), three home-based services (from three localities), one puna, and one playgroup are taking part. One of the education and care services serves children with special needs drawn from a wide area.

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[7] The "20 hours free ECE" policy was extended to all teacher-led services, including privately owned services, in the Government Budget, 18 May 2006, after data for this phase was collected.

Community meetings

Community meetings were held in each locality in June-July 2004. The aims of the community meetings were to:

- discuss the evaluation so that the local community[8] is well informed about it;
- generate support for the collection of locality based data;
- find out some information about local issues relating to strategic plan goals and policies (especially planning and provision) and pinpoint sources of further information;
- discuss how the community would like to use the findings from their locality study; and
- discuss ways to feed back findings.

NZCER and TKRNT researchers developed a format and material for presentation to the community meetings, comprising background information about the strategic plan and government budget announcements, an explanation of the locality-based evaluation, small group discussion questions, and the organisation of a final full group session. The small group discussions were intended to find out what participants thought about what is happening now in early childhood education in relation to their locality, what participants predicted would happen in the future given proposed qualification, ratio and funding changes, and the nature of relationships among ECE services and with other organisations. The final full group session was organised so that people could hear from other groups, raise issues and suggestions, and discuss what feedback they would like from the meetings.

We invited representatives from all early childhood education services (including parents as representatives) and primary schools within each of the CAUs where the evaluation is occurring to attend, using Ministry of Education contact information. We also invited health, welfare and community organisation, iwi, and government department representatives whom we expected would have relationships with the ECE services.

An average of 28 people attended each meeting (the smallest number was 14, and the largest 35). Notes of the community meetings were sent back to participants with a contact list, and the main themes raised reported to the Ministry of Education in August 2004.

In four community meetings people from a range of organisations said they were meeting together for the first time to discuss ECE provision, and in three of these localities, follow-up meetings were arranged by people in organisations working with ECE services.

The prime purpose of the community meetings was to discuss the strategic plan evaluation so that communities were well informed about it, and to generate support for collection of locality based information. It was felt to be important to have the support of ECE services since the funding review and regulatory review were occurring at the time and we did not want the evaluation confused with these. We also wanted to find out some local information about issues related to strategic plan goals and policies, and pinpoint sources of further information about that locality.

The meetings were particularly useful in informing the participants, gaining their interest and goodwill, and providing some new information about the localities and perceptions of the strategic plan. They were not representative meetings, since some services were not present, and at some meetings, people were present who were not from the immediate locality.

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[8]   Local community is the CAU in which the sample ECE services are located and other organisations that have relationships with these ECE services (or nearby).

Data collection in the localities

Data collection began in August 2004, While most was completed by the end of November, data for two services could only be undertaken in January–March 2005.

Training of field researchers

NZCER and Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust field researchers shared two days training about the purpose and background of the evaluation, and interviewing and the interview schedules, and the use of the service rating scale (for those unfamiliar with it). All four NZCER field researchers had used the rating scale recently, and one of the three TKRNT field researchers. The two field researchers who had not used the rating scale rated the same service as a project leader, afterwards comparing and discussing ratings, to ensure there was a consistent understanding of the items and their marking.

NZCER researchers visited each service on two occasions, a week or more apart. Because TKRNT had spent more time than anticipated gaining whānau consent, the Ministry of Education agreed to the fieldwork in the puna taking place over two days in the same week (not consecutive). Kōhanga reo were visited on two occasions, a week apart.

Service data sources

The field researchers

- rated each ECE service on process quality and actual teacher/educator:child ratios and group size, on two occasions
- obtained a service profile of the operation of ECE service (filled in by service managers)
- gathered information about operation and pedagogical practice from the service management;
- interviewed the parent management committee/whānau and/or management;
- surveyed parents/whānau in the ECE service; and
- held a group interview with teachers/educators/kaiako.

ECE service management or staff were asked to distribute the parent/whānau survey and information about the evaluation at the field researcher's first visit. The field researcher also talked informally to parents/whānau as they picked up their children, and encouraged responses. Completed surveys were collected on their second visit to the ECE service.

Written surveys were not feasible to use with parents attending one service that caters for refugees. We worked with the supervisor of this service to turn the survey into a set of 10 questions that could be asked of parents as a group. Three group sessions, each lasting several hours, were held at the service, with bilingual staff attending each. The groups were facilitated by the adult programme leader at the service, and notes provided by the staff. This turned out to be a very useful process for the service itself.

> *I think this experience has been great for all of us. Families certainly enjoyed being consulted, and said so. Feedback was given with respect and humour. I have never had so much feedback ever from families involved in early childhood centres. We would certainly repeat this exercise again. (ECE service manager).*

The mix of methods used in the evaluation are intended to provide comprehensive information, including service and parent perspectives, that relate directly to the strategic plan's goals and outcomes, including services'

expectations and planned actions, and which would also provide contextual information that would help us understand differences emerging across localities and services.

NZCER ECE service quality rating scale

This scale was first used in the longitudinal Competent Children/Learners project, and was further developed by NZCER-TKRNT for their evaluation of Equity Funding (comparing baseline ratings with ratings of the same services a year later) and study of Quality in Parent/whānau-led Centres (analysing factors that were associated with different ratings). It has also been used as a source of data to decide and assess cycles of action research/professional development in the Wilton playcentre Centre of Innovation work. It consists of 35 items. These are briefly outlined in Appendix 2. Use of this scale enables us to measure change over time for particular aspects, as well as overall.

The following charts outline the information that was gathered about the sample services through the profiles, interviews, and surveys, and where appropriate, the use of Ministry of Education and other data, in relation to the strategic plan goals. Some sources of data have not been used for this first report because we covered similar ground in interviews with the sample services (MoE professional development contract milestones, ERO reviews). The instruments used are available from NZCER on request.

Objective (a) To establish baseline measures in 2004 related to the stated goals

Provision of ECE Services (supported by analysis of Ministry of Education data)

Evaluation Questions			Sub-questions	Data
1. What is the recent history of ECE service provision in this locality?		a	What types of services are currently open and how long have they been operating? Type refers to service type, authority, definition and pay unit as defined EDUMIS.	EDUMIS[9]
		b	What types of services are not available and what are the reasons for this?	Regional MoE staff, MoE data, and focus groups
		c	What closures have there been in the last 2 years?	EDUMIS
		d	What reasons can be identified for this pattern of services opening and closing?	EDUMIS
2. What are the characteristics of the range of ECE services that are available?		a	How many weeks are services open over a year?	RS61[10]
		b	How many hours per day are services open?	Case studies (profile)
		c	What are the characteristics of the property – e.g. ownership, standard	EDUMIS for ownership
		d	What support structures/systems are available to these services?	Regional MoE staff Case studies (management interview) Focus groups
		e	What is the financial status of these services? E.g. differences between revenues and costs and any experiences of cash flow difficulties.	Financial Statements, Audit reports for case study ECE services (HOI to use)

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[9] The Ministry of Education Institution Profile.

[10] The Annual Return of Children and Staff in Licensed ECE Services

Evaluation Questions		Sub-questions	Data
3. What, if any, opportunities are there for expanded/changed provision in this locality and what, if any, constraints are there on these changes?	a	What, if any, additional/changed provision would ECE services like to make available to parents/whānau/families?	Regional MoE staff Case studies (management interview) Focus groups
	b	What justifications are there for this additional or different provision?	
	c	What, if any, actions are planned to develop these possibilities?	
	d	What, if any, constraints are there on developing these possibilities?	
4. What is the relationship between supply of services and demand for services?	a	Which, if any, services have spare capacity and what are the reasons for this?	RS61
	b	Which, if any, services experience high demand and what are the reasons for this?	RS61 Case studies (parent survey, management interview). Focus groups Promoting Participation Project in Manurewa, Glen Innes and Christchurch
	c	Are parents/families/whānau looking for types of services that are not currently available?	
	d	Is there evidence of unmet needs or changing demands for services?	
5. What, if any, assessment of community needs is taking place?	a	Who is carrying out assessment of provision by existing services, and how is this done?	Regional MoE staff. Discretionary Grant Scheme Case studies (parent survey, management interview) Community meetings Focus groups
	b	Who is carrying out assessment of community needs, and how is this done?	

Participation in ECE (supported by analysis of Ministry of Education data)

Evaluation Questions		Sub-questions	Data
1. What are the reasons for the choices parents/whānau make about ECE participation?	a	Why do parents/whānau want their children to participate in ECE?	Case studies (parent survey).
	b	Do reasons for participation change with the age of the child?	Focus groups
	c	What reasons are there for not participating?	Focus groups (limited information) Promoting Participation Project (in Manurewa, Glen Innes, Christchurch)
2. What are the reasons for any preferences parents/whānau have about particular types of ECE service?	a	What specific needs/expectations/wants do parents/whānau have?	Case studies (parent survey, management interview)
	b	What combinations of services (both formal and informal) are used?	Focus groups
	c	How well do the services they are using meet these needs/expectations/wants?	
3. What are the reasons for any preferences parents/whānau have about the duration of their children's participation?	a	What specific needs/expectations/wants do parents/whānau have?	Case studies (parent survey, management interview)
	b	How well do the services they are using meet these needs/expectations/wants?	Analysis by age
	c	Are preferences related to children's age?	Focus groups

Evaluation Questions		Sub-questions	Data
4. What is the nature of children's enrolment in this locality?	a	How many children are enrolled? By type of service?	RS61 for enrolments
	b	How many children are estimated to not be enrolled?	Regional MoE staff
			Promoting Participation Project in Manurewa, Glen Innes and Christchurch
			MoE for school information on ECE service participation of new entrants
	c	What are the participation rates by ethnicity?	DMA
	d	What combinations of dual enrolments are used and what is the prevalence of these?	Case studies – (Parent survey, management interview)
			Focus groups
5. What is the nature of children's participation in this locality? Analysis by service type, service EQI and by children's ethnicity is required.	a	How many days per week do children attend and what range of services do they attend at?	Weekly hours of attendance from RS61
	b	How many hours per day do children attend (in different services where appropriate)?	Case studies – roll data, (parent survey, management interview)
	c	How consistent/regular is children's attendance?	Focus groups
	d	How much attendance do children accumulate before they go to school?	

Quality in ECE (supported by analysis of Ministry of Education data)

Evaluation Questions		Sub-questions	Data
1. What are the ECE qualifications of staff/adults?	a	When/where did staff gain their ECE qualifications?	2003 Workforce survey Case studies (profile)
	b	What other relevant qualifications are held?	RS 61 & 2003 Workforce survey Case studies (profile)
	c	How many staff/adults are currently studying for ECE qualifications?	
	d	When do they expect to complete their qualifications?	
	e	Where appropriate, are services likely to be able to meet the targets for qualified and registered staff? If not, what are the reasons?	RS 61 & Workforce survey Case studies (staff interview, management interview) Focus groups
2. What are the current ratios, group sizes and space allocations?	a	Is there a difference between the minimum standard required and the operational practices of services?	ECE Regulations Case studies (profile, quality ratings) Focus groups
	b	What are the workplace roles of the adults that are counted in ratios and how much contact with children do these staff have?	Case studies (profile) Focus groups
3. What resources are available?	a	What people resources do services have access to?	Case studies (quality ratings, profile, staff interview, management interview) Focus groups
	b	What language and cultural resources do services have access to?	
	c	What materials and equipment do services have access to?	
	d	What is available in the physical environment for children?	Case studies (quality ratings) Focus groups
	e	What is available in the physical environment for adults?	Case studies (profile, quality ratings) Focus groups

Evaluation Questions		Sub-questions	Data
4. What ongoing development is taking place?	a	What ongoing learning do staff/adults engage in? (e.g. PD)	PD contract milestones for localities Case studies (profile) Focus groups
5. What processes are used for curriculum implementation?	a	What processes are used for programme planning, implementation, assessment, evaluation and self review?	ERO reports Case studies (parent survey, staff interview, documentation)
	b	What time is allocated for (a)?	
	c	What involvement do parents have with the curriculum?	
	d	How are exemplars used by ECE services?	
6. What are the observed levels of process quality in services?	a	Note that process quality relates to the logic model outcome: "quality teaching and learning practices" and is being used in this evaluation as a proxy for children's long term learning outcomes. Process quality measures need to include: – Adult/staff interactions with children – Adult/adult interactions – Child/Child interactions – The curriculum in action – Use of resources	Case studies (quality ratings)
7. How are leadership roles in services developed?	a	What are the leadership roles with respect to educational leadership, teaching and learning, meeting whānau needs, administration etc.	Case studies (staff interview, management interview, parent survey) Focus groups
	b	What types of leadership development programmes are used in the service – e.g.. teacher registration, professional development, tertiary courses/courses on management, administration etc.	

Collaborative Relationships (supported by analysis of Ministry of Education data)

Evaluation Questions		Sub-questions	Data
1. What are the characteristics of the relationships between ECE services and parents/whānau?	a	How involved are parents/whānau and in what ways?	Case studies (parent survey, management interview, staff interview)
	b	What relationships have been developed with Māori communities/iwi?	Focus groups
	c	What relationships have been developed with Pasifika communities?	Regional MoE staff
	d	Does the relationship depend on whether the services are of a similar or a different type?	Documentation
	e	Is there a 'joined-up' approach to service provision e.g. through using the same site or through sharing information?	
2. What are the characteristics of the relationships between different ECE services?			
	f	For each question: What is the purpose of the relationship (from different viewpoints)?	
3. What are the characteristics of the relationships between ECE services and schools?	g	To what extent is collaboration evident?	
	h	What are the reasons for different degrees of collaboration?	
	i	How much time is spent on these relationships?	
	j	What outcomes are evident from these relationships?	
4. What are the characteristics of the relationships between ECE services and other community based agencies?			
5. What are the characteristics of the relationships between ECE services and other government agencies?			

Other data sources

In May-June 2005, NZCER researchers interviewed regional Ministry of Education staff about the locality provision, participation, quality, and their role in relation to any Ministry of Education action for the locality in relation to the strategic plan goals.

The Ministry of Education provided us with quantitative data drawn from RS61 annual reports for the year ended 2004 for the sample ECE services and the ECE services in the census ward around them, in June 2005.

Deciding the sample took longer than envisaged, and work could not start until early April 2004. There followed an intense period of setting up the community meetings, instrument development, holding the community meetings and writing up the notes from these, contacting and getting the acceptance of the sample services in each locality, fieldwork, and data-entry. Particularly because of the longitudinal nature of the project, we have entered all interview material into N6, a software package that captures qualitative data. This enables us to cross-tabulate qualitative as well as quantitative material, and allow efficient comparison of base-line data with data collected in later years, to allow both measurement of change and insight into how change occurred (or did not).

The times envisaged in the proposal to complete all this first cycle of work proved over-optimistic. This is one of the reasons why we did not undertake the locality focus groups outlined in the evaluation proposal. These were intended to follow the data collection, and initial analysis of emerging themes. We envisaged inviting ECE service parents, management, teacher/educators from all the ECE service types in the area to a shared session, with opportunity for separate groupings for parents, management, and teacher/educators. The groups would be asked to discuss some findings from the case studies, and asked to discuss their generality in respect to their own services, and to identify issues related to ECE services and strategic plan initiatives in their own area. The usefulness and feasibility of holding these focus groups to comment on findings from this baseline report is to be discussed with the Ministry of Education.

Analysis

In this report, we have brought together information across the localities so that we can compare the localities. This enables the identification of patterns, and the extent to which patterns that emerge seem locality-related. This information includes statistical data at ward level. This provides another useful base to track change over time, as well as a context for the changes in the individual case-study services.

The main analysis work has been to explore different measures of the strategic plan goals of provision, participation, quality, and collaboration, through cross-tabulation with factors that are likely to have some relevance to how the strategic plan takes life. We have called these measures 'indicators'. These are outlined in chapter 4. The factors used in this analysis are:

- Locality
- Rural/urban
- Low socio-economic/not
- Population increase/decrease/stability
- ECE service type
- ECE service is sessional/full-day
- Proportion of Māori children attending the service

- Proportion of Pacific children attending the service
- Equity Index (EQI) of the service
- Proportion of the service roll aged under 2

We have then cross-tabulated and considered the dimensions of participation, quality, and collaboration within each of the 46 services, so that we can gain some understanding of how these goals relate to each other—whether, for example, a service with full capacity (often an indicator of sustainability), and high levels of regular attendance by the children enrolled with it, is more likely to show high levels on the various indicators of quality used, and good levels of collaboration with other ECE services.

We have also analysed information in the locality descriptions (detailed in the separate volume) in terms of service type, and information from the parent survey in terms of locality and service type, so that we can see any trends across different sources of information in terms of the likely impact of the ECE strategic plan.

In the conclusion, we have aimed to synthesise these different descriptions and analyses, with a focus on aspects that may need attention in the achieving of the ECE strategic plan goals and outcomes.

3 Provision, participation, & collaboration – ward-level picture

In this section we provide a picture of some of the key service and participation characteristics of the wards in which the case-studies are being done. Changes in these characteristics over time can provide some context for any changes in the individual case-studies. Some of these characteristics however may be less useful for this purpose than originally envisaged, since the Ministry of Education dataset, which is reliant on returns from individual services, is incomplete, and also does not contain kōhanga reo. Kōhanga reo are not required to complete RS 61 forms. Collated data from kōhanga reo are given to the Ministry of Education on the maramataka for funding purposes.

Provision

Ward-level

The services in this study comprise 20 percent of the services in the wards that were used to define the localities. This varies from 63 percent in one rural locality, to 10 percent in an urban locality.[11] There were 233 ECE services in the eight study wards.[12] The next table gives the range of service types. A breakdown for each locality is given in the next chapter, which summarises each of the localities.

Table 2:   **ECE service types for the 8 study wards**

Service type	n=233
Kindergarten	29
Kōhanga reo	38
Education and care	121
Playcentre	24
Pasifika	4
Home-based	11
Playgroup	1
Puna	1
Casual	2

[11]   The sample was not chosen to provide a representative sample of either services in a ward, or enrolments in a ward. Rather, the ward data will be used as context in the interpretation of changes in the sample services.

[12]   The number of services for whom we had data differs slightly depending on the aspect. Some data on unlicensed services has been included where possible.

Most of these services have been operating for some years. Nikau (a growing suburb) and Pohutakawa (city area) had more services that had opened in the last five years.

Table 3:   **ECE services' length of operation**

Locality	More than 15 years (n=92)	11–15 years (n=57)	6–10 years (n=50)	5 years or less (n=36)
Kauri	43	39	14	4
Pohutakawa	34	18	2 8	20
Kowhai	37	25	21	16
Karaka	50	19	25	6
Totara	33	44	11	11
Nikau	45	18	9	27
Rata	44	17	22	17
Rimu	38	38	13	13
Overall	*39*	*24*	*21*	*15*

Numbers do not add up to 100% because of missing data from 2% (of 233 services) overall

Two services closed in 2004, both because of declining rolls. One was in Rimu, a rural area, and one in Pohutakawa.

The table following shows the number of weeks ECE services were open over the year from July 2003 to 30 June 2004, in each ward, and overall for the 8 wards in the study. Around a quarter were open all year, but with wide variations by locality. Some localities had relatively few services offering ECE for 50 weeks a year or more.

Table 4:   **Number of weeks open a year**

Locality	Less than 40 weeks	40–45 weeks	46–49 weeks	50–51 weeks	52 weeks
Kauri	11	57	7	11	4
Pohutakawa	7	36	14	17	24
Kowhai	3	33	15	10	39
Karaka	6	31	13	0	44
Totara	0	44	33	0	0
Nikau	0	64	9	18	9
Rata	0	39	39	0	17
Rimu	0	25	13	13	12
Overall	*5*	*38*	*17*	*11*	*24*

Numbers do not add up to 100% because of missing data from 10% overall

Sixty-eight percent of the 233 services in these wards for which we have the data (this includes kōhanga reo) provided full-day ECE, and 30 percent were sessional. Karaka and Totara had higher proportions of full-day services.

Table 5: **Full-day and sessional services**

Locality	Full-day (n=159) %	Sessional (n=70) %
Kauri	54	39
Pohutakawa	70	29
Kowhai	70	30
Karaka	81	19
Totara	78	22
Nikau	64	36
Rata	67	33
Rimu	63	25
Overall	*68*	*30*

Numbers do not add up to 100% because of missing data from 2% (of 233 services) overall.

Qualifications & Registration

Teacher-led services

Overall, 42 percent of the ECE staff in these 8 wards in teacher-led services (kindergarten, education and care services, and casual services) had qualifications that enabled them to be registered. Another 17 percent may be close to achieving these, i.e. staff who had more than 100 licensed points, if they were undertaking training, and staff with other ECE qualifications, if these qualifications were recognised by NZQA. Differences between localities may reflect the number of kindergartens in relation to the number of education and care services as much as anything else.

Table 6:   **ECE staff qualifications in teacher-led services**

Locality	Higher than diploma*	Diploma	100 or more licence points#	ECE quals & experience less than 100 or more licence points	Other ECE qual, e.g. overseas, Montessori	No ECE qual
Kauri	7	37	7	7	3	40
Pohutakawa	11	28	16	5	4	38
Kowhai	7	26	18	9	1	38
Karaka	3	62	38	14	0	17
Totara	10	30	0	5	20	35
Nikau	12	56	2	0	2	27
Rata	20	43	3	3	3	26
Rimu	41	27	0	5	0	27
Overall	*11*	*31*	*14*	*6*	*3*	*35*

* This includes a Master of Education or Teaching & Learning, Bachelor of Education (Teaching, ECE), Advanced Diploma in Teaching, Higher Diploma in Teaching (ECE). # = ECE qualifications and experience totalling 100 or more licensing points.

Seventy-eight percent of the ECE staff were full-time employees of their service. Full-time staff were more likely to have a registerable ECE qualification (45 percent), compared with 31 percent of part-time staff.

Overall, 29 percent of the teachers in the teacher-led services were registered (fully or provisionally).

Table 7:   **ECE teacher-led services – teacher registration status**

Locality	Fully registered*	Provisionally registered	Limited authority to teach	Not registered
Kauri	10	10	0	80
Pohutakawa	18	8	4	70
Kowhai	15	5	0	80
Karaka	44	5	0	51
Totara	25	10	0	65
Nikau	37	20	0	44
Rata	31	7	0	62
Rimu	36	32	0	32
Overall	*21*	*8*	*1.5*	*70*

* This includes a few who do not have a NZ Teachers' Council practising certificate, but do have full registration.

Kōhanga Reo

Across the 8 wards, with a total of 38 kōhanga reo, 20 kaiako had the Whakapakari qualification, and eight had an ECE Diploma. Eighty-two kaiako and whānau were undertaking training (28 Whakapakari, 8 Te Ara Tuarua, 46 Te Ara Tuatahi, and 2 ECE Diplomas). There was some variation across localities in the extent of TKRNT qualifications and numbers in training.

Table 8:   **Kōhanga Reo – Qualifications and in training**

Locality	Whakapakari	ECE Diploma	In training	No. of kōhanga
Kauri	6	1	23	11
Pohutakawa	4		16	8
Kowhai	5	5	21	8
Karaka	2	2	10	3
Totara	1			4
Nikau	2		2	1
Rata			2	1
Rimu			2	2
Overall	*20*	*8*	*82*	

Playcentre

Sixteen percent of the designated adults on duty had qualifications that would enable them to supervise sessions (57 adults for 24 playcentres). Only 24 percent of the playcentre adults designated for duty had no playcentre qualifications.

Table 9:   **Playcentre designated adults for duty qualifications**

Locality	Required for supervisor (Part 3 & above)*	Part 2	Part 1	No playcentre Qualification
Kauri	11	29	44	12
Pohutakawa	16	9	43	32
Kowhai	16	20	41	23
Karaka	56	11	11	22
Totara	25	42	33	0
Nikau	11	25	39	25
Rata	13	0	33	53
Rimu	No data	No data	No data	No data
Overall	*16*	*19*	*41*	*24*

* This includes Playcentre Federation Association Certificate, Playcentre National Certificate, Courses 3, 4, and 5 , Part 3.

In addition, over the 8 wards, 2 paid and 3 unpaid playcentre staff had an ECE diploma, and one paid staff member had 100 or more licensing points.

There were 57 paid playcentre staff and 296 unpaid staff over the 8 localities. Paid staff accounted for only 20 percent of the hours spent by playcentre staff each week. Just over half the paid staff (53 percent) did not have the qualifications to act as supervisor. This underlines the reliance of playcentres on voluntary participation.

In addition, 259 playcentre adults designated to be on duty were currently studying for an ECE qualification. Fifteen percent of these were employed by playcentres. There appeared to be no-one studying for an ECE qualification in Rimu.

Table 10: **Playcentre designated adults on duty currently studying for an ECE qualification**

Locality	Paid adult	Unpaid adult
Kauri	13	75
Pohutakawa	8	81
Kowhai	5	30
Karaka	0	6
Totara	0	8
Nikau	12	13
Rata	2	6
Rimu	0	0
Overall	*40*	*219*

Home-based services

Home-based services existed in 5 of the 8 wards, employing 188 caregivers, 82 percent full-time. The highest number were employed in Karaka, a small rural ward.

Table 11: **Home-based caregiver employment**

Locality	Full-time (n=154)	Part-time (n=34)
Pohutakawa	21	6
Kowhai	24	2
Karaka	79	19
Rata	22	6
Rimu	8	1

Just over half (52 percent) had had some training for home-based care, usually consisting of the Caregiver module of the NZ certificate of family day care. Few had taken other modules of this certificate.

Table 12:   **Home-based service caregiver qualifications**

Locality	Module 1 of NZCFRC – caregiver	Module 1 + one other	NZQA approved higher qual	Higher ECE qual
Pohutakawa	27	0	0	0
Kowhai	26	0	0	0
Karaka	18	17	11	1
Rata	21	0	1	3
Rimu	6	3	0	0
Overall	*98*	*20*	*12*	*4*

Specialist and support staff

Few specialist staff were employed by ECE services, and all were part-time. One was employed in Kauri, one in Pohutakawa, and five in Kowhai ward.

A total of 155 support staff were employed in six wards (none were employed in Rimu). Seventy-four percent of these worked part-time.

Table 13:   **Support staff employment**

Locality	Full-time n	Part-time n
Kauri	3	3
Pohutakawa	11	45
Kowhai	17	38
Karaka	3	13
Totara	1	1
Nikau	4	7
Rata	2	7
Rimu	0	0

Children's participation

Enrolment

In total, there were 9459 children enrolled in the ECE services (other than kōhanga reo) in these wards in mid 2004. Over a third were aged four years or more.

Table 14: **2004 ECE enrolments, by age & locality**

Locality	Under one year (n=390) %	One year (n=1053) %	Two years (n=1706) %	3 years (n=2754) %	4 years (n=3475) %	5 years (n=81) %
Kauri	4	14	20	26	33	3
Pohutakawa	4	12	17	30	36	1
Kowhai	4	10	18	29	39	1
Karaka	5	13	21	28	33	0
Totara	2	6	15	32	45	8
Nikau	2	8	18	33	39	0
Rata	5	14	21	30	30	1
Rimu	6	11	14	21	47	2
Overall	*4*	*11*	*18*	*29*	*37*	*1*

Numbers do not add up to 100% because of missing data from 2% (of 233 services) overall

Two-thirds of the children enrolled in ECE were enrolled for less than 21 hours a week. The table below shows some variation of weekly hours of attendance by age. Most of the 3- and 4-year-olds were attending for less than 19 hours a week.

Table 15: **Enrolment hours by age**

Hours per week	Under one year (n=357)	One year (n=940)	Two years (n=1532)	3 years (n=2512)	4 years (n=3267)	5 years (n=46)	*Overall* %
Less than 9	37	33	39	50	28	28	37
9–18	18	14	19	22	48	35	30
18–21	5	4	4	3	4	7	4
21–30	13	15	11	8	8	24	9
30–39	6	9	7	4	3	0	5
39+	21	25	20	14	10	7	15
Overall	*4*	*11*	*18*	*29*	*37*	*1*	

The hour categories are those used in the RS61. Data in this table covers 8654 children; kōhanga reo data was not available.

Overall for these eight wards, European children comprised 49 percent of enrolments, Māori children were 27 percent, Pacific children 13 percent, Asian children 9 percent, and 2 percent were of other ethnicities. However, these proportions were different between localities.

Table 16: **2004 ECE enrolments, by ethnicity**

Locality	European/ Pākehā (n=4669)	Māori (n= 2527)	Pacific n= 1272)	Asian n= 830)	Other (n= 161)
Kauri	19	78	2	0	0
Pohutakawa	39	18	23	17	2
Kowhai	36	34	18	9	2
Karaka	68	31	1	1	0
Totara	48	47	2	3	0
Nikau	89	8	0	2	1
Rata	75	14	5	4	3
Rimu	88	10	1	1	0
Overall	*49*	*27*	*13*	*9*	*2*

Numbers do not add up to 100% because of missing data from 2% (of 233 services) overall

Attendance regularity

Eighty percent or more of the children enrolled in the study wards attending ECE services other than kōhanga reo (for which we do not have data) did so regularly in June 2004. Attendance was highest in Karaka (a small town) and Nikau (a growing suburb); it was lower in low socio-economic localities. Levels of regularity of attendance have implications for both children's learning opportunities, and for services' sustainability, since Ministry of Education funding is tied to actual attendance.

Table 17: **Regularity of enrolled children's attendance in study wards (other than kōhanga reo)**

Locality	Proportion attending
Kauri	66
Pohutakawa	81
Kowhai	82
Karaka	89
Totara	71
Nikau	86
Rata	85
Rimu	80
Overall	*81*

Taken from services' RS 61 annual reporting to Ministry of Education, for the week of 21–27 June 2004.

Casual attendance was 2.7 percent of the total daily enrolments in the 8 wards (815/30,535), and 3.3 percent of the total daily attendance (815/24,829).

Proportion of children attending ECE

As noted in the methodology chapter, this is hard to specify. The following picture is provided from the information supplied by parents of new entrants to the schools where they enrolled their children. In these 8 wards, 84 percent of the new entrants were said by their parents to have had some ECE attendance, with higher attendance by European/Pākehā children, and lowest by Māori, Pacific and children of other ethnicities. Pacific new entrants comprised 45 percent of the non-attendees, and Māori, 35 percent. Localities with the lowest ECE attendance tended to be those with higher Māori or Pacific populations.

Table 18:   **ECE attendance of new entrants to school in 2004**

Locality	Overall attendance (% of new entrants)	European/ Pākehā %	Māori %	Pacific %	Asian %	Other %
Kauri	73	76	79	100	N/a	N/a
Pohutakawa	78	96	63	77	84	74
Kowhai	80	89	78	72	90	77
Karaka	98	97	100	N/a	N/a	N/a
Totara	94	96	96	N/a	N/a	N/a
Nikau	91	91	100	100	N/a	N/a
Rata	96	99	86	100	93	83
Rimu	99	99	100	N/a	100	N/a
Overall	*84*	*94*	*80*	*76*	*85*	*78*

Data is missing for some children. The proportions for ethnicity are taken from the totals, including those for whom schools were unable to establish if there had been some ECE attendance. This is likely to give a conservative estimate of non-attendance. Note that where there are small numbers for ethnic groups, attendance appears to be higher than for other localities (e.g. Maori and Pacific attendance in Nikau and Rata). This may be a numerical artefact

Waiting lists give some indication of unmet need, though not totally reliable. On the one hand, they are likely to include children whose names are down for more than one ECE service, who may have moved from an area, or who are now settled in another ECE service. On the other, they are likely not to include children whose parents are discouraged by the existence of waiting lists, or do not use them.

Overall, there were 2814 eligible children who were on the waiting lists for these eight wards in June 2004. This is equivalent to 30 percent of the total number of enrolments (9459), bearing in mind that this includes dual enrolments. Five of the localities had overall waiting list:current enrolment ratios of around 30 percent. Rimu's was the highest. This is a rural area. Two other rural areas had the lowest waiting list: current enrolment ratios. Yet both of these had higher proportions of under-twos on waiting lists, indicating that it is important to look at local provision in terms of age-groups as well as overall numbers. The age-group most likely to be waiting for places was age 3, which has implications for the strategic plan's goal of funding 20 hours free ECE for 3- and 4-year-olds in all teacher-led services, if existing provision is already unable to meet demand.

Table 19: **2004 ECE waiting lists of eligible children, by age & locality**

Locality	Under one year (n=101) %	One year (n=118) %	Two years (n=769) %	3 years (n=1392) %	4 years (n=434) %	Total number	Total number as % of current enrolments
Kauri	31	24	35	9	2	55	9
Pohutakawa	2	3	26	47	23	1005	34
Kowhai	2	2	29	52	16	845	31
Karaka	2	2	32	57	8	185	24
Totara	11	9	26	54	0	46	18
Nikau	5	5	15	64	12	176	26
Rata	12	17	38	28	6	294	27
Rimu	0	0	18	76	6	208	55
Overall	*4*	*4*	*27*	*50*	*15*	*2814*	*30*

Sixty-eight percent of the reported eligible children waiting to attend were waiting to attend kindergarten, 27 percent education and care services, 3 percent kōhanga reo, 2 percent, home-based services, and 0.4 percent, playcentres. The table below which looks further at the waiting lists for each ECE type is likely to reflect two things: first, parental perceptions of which service best suits their child, which differs in relation to age, and related to this, the current age-focus of different services.

Table 20: **2004 ECE waiting lists of eligible children, by age & service type**

Service type	Under one year (n=101) %	One Year (n=118) %	Two years (n=769) %	3 years (n=1392) %	4 years (n=434) %	Total number	Total %
Kindergarten	0	0	76	80	48	1899	68
Education and care	48	63	19	19	51	758	27
Kōhanga reo	30	21	3	0.4	0	83	3
Home-based	22	13	2	0.5	0	62	2
Playcentre	1	3	1	0.1	0.2	12	0.4
Overall	*4*	*4*	*27*	*50*	*15*	*2814*	

Given that most kindergartens cater for children from age 3, the high proportion of 2-year-old children on the kindergarten waiting lists may indicate parents wanting to make sure their 3-year-old child will be assured of a place. But it may be worth investigating parental perceptions further. It is interesting to see that similar proportions of 4-year-olds were on waiting lists for kindergarten and education and care services: this may have implications for patterns of demand when the free 20 hours for 3- and 4 year-olds in teacher-led ECE services is introduced in 2007.

These provision and participation patterns for 8 localities raise some interesting issues in relation to the smooth roll-out of the ECE strategic plan and it will be useful to explore possible issues later in the evaluation. These patterns may or may not hold if similar analysis was to be done at a national level, and for a larger number of localities: it would therefore be useful to check them by undertaking further analysis on a wider scale.

Collaboration

The RS61 form that ECE services other than kōhanga reo fill out includes questions on relations with health services, social services, and local schools, and on service provision of parent education and OSCAR (out of school programmes). It does not (yet) include questions on relations with other ECE services. Information from these forms is used in this section.

Contact with health services

Ear checks were the most commonly reported—by 61 percent of the services in this sample. Eye checks were happening in around half the services, and dental health visits at just over a third. Visiting doctors and nurses, contact with counselling services and immunisation (this data predates the meningococcal immunisation) were relatively infrequent, and sometimes did not happen in the services studied in a ward.

Table 21:   **Relations with health services**

Locality	Visiting doctor	Visiting nurse	Immun-isation	Ear checks	Eye checks	Dental health visits	Counsell-ing
Kauri	2	8	2	8	7	3	3
Pohutakawa	21	26	11	51	30	36	22
Kowhai	7	9	8	50	48	43	13
Karaka	0	2	0	9	9	5	4
Totara	0	1	0	4	3	0	0
Nikau	0	1	0	7	7	1	0
Rata	0	3	1	9	9	1	5
Rimu	0	3	0	4	4	1	1
Overall	*30*	*53*	*22*	*142*	*117*	*90*	*48*

The Mokopuna Oranga Pumau programme in kōhanga reo aims to give all children regular checks by GPs and Iwi health services. Some children are referred to paediatricians for ear, nose, and throat issues.

Contact with social services

Contact with social services occurred for around a third of the services, most frequently in the two low-income city wards.

Table 22:   **ECE services contact with social services**

Locality	Iwi social services	Community workers	SES or =nt	Social/CYFS workers
Kauri	2	4	4	4
Pohutakawa	9	22	22	29
Kowhai	8	21	25	30
Karaka	5	4	7	7
Totara	1	0	2	0
Nikau	0	1	6	3
Rata	2	7	8	8
Rimu	1	2	3	2
Overall	*28*	*61*	*77*	*83*

Contact with schools

Sixty percent of the ECE services gave information to parents about local schools, but just under half reported that they visited with local schools to support children's transition.

Table 23:   **Relationships with local schools**

Locality	Service located on school grounds	Share facilities with local schools	Transition visits to/from local schools	Local schools support the recruitment of children	Provide information to parents/care-givers on local schools	Other relationships
Kauri	4	4	13	12	11	5
Pohutakawa	7	7	38	36	46	21
Kowhai	7	8	31	27	43	11
Karaka	0	0	8	8	11	2
Totara	0	1	3	2	4	1
Nikau	3	2	6	7	8	3
Rata	0	0	5	9	13	7
Rimu	0	0	1	3	4	2
Overall	*21*	*22*	*105*	*104*	*140*	*52*

Parent education and OSCAR

Just over half the ECE services said they provided parent education programmes.

Table 24: **ECE services parent education programmes & OSCAR programmes**

Locality	Parent education	OSCAR
Kauri	8	1
Pohutakawa	48	11
Kowhai	34	3
Karaka	8	6
Totara	1	0
Nikau	8	2
Rata	12	3
Rimu	4	3
Overall	*123*	*29*

4 The 8 localities

In this chapter, we briefly outline main characteristics of the eight localities, and summarise the results of the baseline data collection.

Kauri

The Kauri ward is mainly rural. It has a predominantly Māori population, low median individual income level, and a high unemployment rate. Seventy-three percent of the age-5 new entrants to school were reported to have had some ECE experience, the lowest rate of the eight study wards. Māori participation was at the average for the study wards; European/Pākehā participation was somewhat lower.

In 2004, Kauri ward had 28 ECE services; 6 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 25: **Kauri service types**

Service type	N=28	Sample
Kindergarten	1	1
Kōhanga reo	11	1
Playcentre	9	1
Education and care	5	1
Playgroup	1	1
Puna	1	1

Waiting lists were the lowest of all the wards, but were higher than other wards for children under two years. Regularity of attendance (not including kōhanga reo)[13] was at the average for the eight wards.

No services have closed in the last two years. Four of the 28 services were privately owned. Fifteen provided full day ECE, and 11, sessional ECE. (Information for two was not available).Most of these services (88 percent) were open for at least 40 weeks of the 2003–04 year. There were 3 non-responses. Sixty-four percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 8 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 16 percent, between 50–52 weeks.

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[13]   We do not have this data for kōhanga reo.

Participation and provision

Key participation issues are

- low rates of participation, and
- irregularity of attendance.

The Ministry of Education has designated Kauri as a low participation locality.

Participants at the community meeting and case study services attributed low participation to limited provision of services to meet diverse needs in some isolated areas, transience of families, and cultural needs and preferences. In isolated areas, the only services available to parents were parent and whānau-led. In these areas, choice of service did not meet needs of families who wanted all day provision or more sessions, but who did not want their child to attend a kōhanga reo. Irregular attendance was particularly marked in winter, due to transport problems, and when parents were engaged in seasonal work.

Overall, the six case study services in this locality were working to capacity except for the puna. There were concerns about the ongoing decline of playcentre, because of few families with young children and difficulties in attracting parents prepared to train and run playcentre. Predicted falling birthrates may lead to further decline in playcentre, and to decline of playgroups and puna, with possible closures. In areas where these are the only ECE services and they close, parents would be left with no local options available to them. This could impact on the strategic plan goal of increasing participation.

Of all localities, Kauri had the lowest percentage of children waiting for a place, or waiting for changed hours or days, possibly because options here are limited. However, waiting lists were the highest of all localities for under-twos.

Information from parents responding showed in comparison with other localities:

- Parents put somewhat more emphasis on their child getting ready for school, their child learning their own language and culture, supporting the service kaupapa, parents being able to learn their own language and culture, and parents being able to learn about child development, help at the service, or meet others, as reasons for their child's ECE attendance.
- Parents rated being able to access a service that had a good reputation, was not too expensive, had hours that suited, and was close to home or work as somewhat more important.
- A somewhat higher proportion of parents were not in paid work, but where they were, full-time work was more frequent.

The education and care service is going to expand. Kindergarten management and teachers were considering how they could be more responsive to family needs to encourage participation, and considering change in both their structure and practice. Teachers would like more guidance on how to do this.

The main action that the regional MOE representative interviewed said MOE is considering in respect to improving participation in this area is to strengthen the quality of playgroups through professional support, provided that the playgroup operates for a minimum of 9 hours per week and offers an education programme based on Te Whāriki. It is also supporting provisionally licensed services to become fully licensed.

Quality

Teaching and learning processes

Kauri had the lowest average overall rating of all process quality items for all localities. Ratings for sub-indicators were around the medium mark, with below average ratings for children's peer interactions, including tuakana teina support and children co-constructing learning. Kōhanga reo had the top rating of 5 for the quality item *Te reo and tikanga Māori* are evident, but other services varied widely, with a minimum rating being 1. Low ratings on this item are of particular concern in a locality which is predominantly Māori, and where parents and management emphasise the importance of learning language and culture as reasons for participation.

This locality was rated lowest of all localities for teacher/educators using Te Whāriki as their curriculum, understanding the concepts and demonstrating its use. There was variability between services with respect to whether they predicted problems in implementing Te Whāriki if it was legislated. Problems that were identified were the need for professional support and training, adequate non-contact time, availability of resources, and teachers wanting to learn how to extend children's play.

There was also variability with respect to assessment based on data collection and linked to Te Whāriki, and the level of planning and evaluation. The variability was in part because a licence-exempt playgroup and puna were included in the sample and these did not use Te Whāriki, undertake evaluation or do much planning. Licensed services described the following issues about assessment, planning and evaluation: insufficient time, inappropriateness of professional development/need for professional support, and the high volunteer workload in playcentre. Only two of four licensed centres undertook self-review. All services except kindergarten had no or very little paid non-contact time.

Structural quality

Ratios

All services were meeting current ratios, though the kōhanga reo and education and care centre used non-teaching staff on occasions. No problems were predicted if ratios change.

Qualifications – teacher-led services

Services had sufficient qualified teachers to meet current requirements, but problems in accessing qualified relievers locally. The kindergarten thought they could face issues if they lost qualified staff over the next two years. The education and care centre identified issues it faced in meeting the requirements starting in 2007:

- No local training provision was available and doing training by correspondence required motivation.
- There was some resistance among older staff to train, mainly because of cost and the fact that they did not intend to work much longer.
- There were few local people who could act as registration supervisors.

The owner hoped that the proposed funding changes would enable her to pay staff better and so recruit and retain them.

Access to registration supervisors and local training provision was an issue for services in the whole locality according to community meeting and the kindergarten and education and care service participants.

This locality had the lowest rating of all eight localities on the indicator of the strength of professional support, and wide variability—only the kindergarten teachers had participated in a range of professional development opportunities and had access to a professional support structure in the last twelve months. Adequacy of support for

leadership was also rated low overall, with only the kindergarten having the full range of management, financial, language and culture, employment and professional advice and support.

Isolation was a key factor in limited access, and the community meeting participants expressed interest in locally co-ordinated professional development opportunities.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led
The kōhanga reo had people in training and was meeting requirements, but most training was done outside kōhanga reo hours because of lack of relievers. A collaborative approach with other kōhanga reo to training provision was desired to help meet goals for qualified staff. It was thought some kōhanga reo in this locality may close if they could not provide the qualified staff.

The playcentre could only meet qualification requirements when the current supervisor was present. Issues for playcentre were:

- insufficient qualified parents;

- turnover of qualified parents (parents leave when their children leave); and

- isolation and the cost of transport to workshops.

The playgroup and puna parent management thought it would be an advantage to have a qualified teacher, although these services are not required to have a qualified teacher. Puna parent management thought cost was a barrier to training. Playgroup parent management wanted access to ECE related workshops.

The regional MOE representative interviewed thought regular weekly professional support for playgroups would be helpful.

In respect to strategic plan goals, raising quality in this locality is a key issue. Legislating Te Whāriki and setting qualification requirements on its own may simply compound difficulties that some services are currently facing. While the exemplars and potentially the self-review guidelines will provide professional resources, teacher/educators in services in this locality are struggling with implementing Te Whāriki, and want more direct support. Key issues for teacher/educators from all services were to have opportunities to participate in training and professional development, and have access to leadership support. In the community meeting for this locality, teachers from ECE services expressed interest in locally co-ordinated professional development opportunities. The medium or slightly below quality ratings in this locality, and the low average rating for children's peer interactions in particular indicate some fruitful directions for the professional development in this locality.

Collaborative relationships
Cohesion of education
Relationships with parents in the interests of children
Most service managers noted some form of collaboration with parents in relation to children's learning. The main issue noted by management other than in playcentre, was having time for communication between teacher/educators and children.

Relationships with schools to support transition
Relationships with schools were rated as moderately high overall, with all services having contact initiated by them, and some having reciprocal relationships. None shared professional development or pedagogical approaches with primary teachers.

Relationships between ECE services for mutual support

Relationships between ECE services of the same type, and among ECE services of diverse types seemed to be developing, except for the playgroup, whose management did not feel relationships with other ECE services were needed. A suggestion from one participant was for teachers to share professional development, pooling resources to pay for a facilitator and thus providing opportunity for services to get together.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and Group Special Education (GSE)

Relationships with health services were not strong, with health professionals visiting only teacher-led services. Relationships with GSE were strong for three services, although community meeting participants thought children were taking too long to be assessed.

Relationships with Māori and iwi

All services wanted their relationship with iwi to be stronger, the kōhanga reo to learn more tikanga, and other services to support the curriculum.

On the whole, the high Māori population in this locality, the aspirations of parents for their child to learn their language and culture, the low average ratings on *te reo and tikanga Māori* for services other than kōhanga reo, and the desire of services to make stronger links with Māori and iwi, indicate supporting such relationships would be a fruitful direction in relation to the strategic plan goal of developing collaborative relationships.

Relationships with Pacific communities

The two services with Pacific children involved Pacific families in their service. Others did not want a relationship with Pacific communities because they had no Pacific families attending.

Pohutakawa

Pohutakawa is an urban ward, with a high proportion of Pacific people. It has a low individual median income, and high unemployment. Seventy-eight percent of the age-5 new entrants to school were reported to have had some ECE experience, somewhat below the average for the eight wards. Māori new entrants were less likely than in other localities to have had ECE experience.

Pohutakawa ward had 76 services, with 8 in the study. These comprised

Table 26: **Pohutakawa service types**

Service type	N=76	Sample
Kindergarten	8	1
Kōhanga reo	8	1
Playcentre	5	1
Education and care	48	1
Home-based	2	1
Pasifika	4	3
Casual	1	

No services have closed in the last two years. Twenty eight of the 76 services were privately owned. Fifty three provided full day ECE, and 22, sessional ECE. (Information for one was not available). Most of these services (93 percent) were open for at least 40 weeks over the 2003–04 year. There were 2 non responses. Thirty-six percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 15 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 42 percent, between 50–52 weeks.

Waiting lists were slightly higher than the average for the eight wards, and higher for 4-year-olds. Regularity of attendance and patterns of enrolment were similar to the other wards overall.

Participation and provision

Cost was a common reason why managers thought parents in this low income area did not use their service. Almost a third of parents responding had some difficulties in affording their child's ECE service and 34 percent of children had their attendance supported through a childcare subsidy.

A key issue with respect to provision is the insufficient places for all families who want them.

Participants at the community meeting said that all day ECE was a need in this locality that was not being met.

The sample kindergarten, two education and care and three Pasifika services were working to capacity, had waiting lists and demand was increasing, largely because of population increases. Pohutakawa had the highest rating of all localities of children waiting for a place. Fourteen percent of parents stated that the times their child attended did not suit, with half wanting all day or mornings only. The sample services had no immediate plans to extend hours or places, although the kindergarten would consider its operation after the funding and regulatory review was completed.

The playcentre was experiencing difficulties in attracting participants. Parental employment, problems in coping with playcentre administration requirements and some parents who were second language speakers having insufficient confidence or not understanding the playcentre concept were reasons.

Information from parents responding in Pohutakawa showed in comparison with other localities:

- A smaller percentage of parents in Pohutakawa were using more than one service.
- Parents were more likely to say that learning and use of the child's language and culture, and supporting the service kaupapa were reasons for their child's attendance.
- It was more important overall that their child's ECE service had a culturally appropriate programme, and was close to their home or work.
- More parents thought their child's ECE service met their needs in terms of providing a culturally appropriate programme, and of having a good ERO report.
- A somewhat higher percentage of parents were not in paid employment.

The three Pasifika services, kōhanga reo, and the education and care centre catering for immigrants who were second language speakers emphasised the language and cultural aspirations of their families. Playcentre management thought playcentre tends to be middle class, but needs to be inclusive and encompassing.

Overall parents generally rated their satisfaction with the service as good or very good, with playcentre parents less likely to rate satisfaction as very good. The "worst" thing about playcentre was the high level of volunteer work.

With respect to the strategic plan, unless there is increased provision, participation will not be able to be improved. Findings from the parental data and management suggest that provision needs to meet parental aspirations, including for a culturally appropriate programme. Increased provision could occur through current services that are not operating to capacity adapting and being supported to attract more parents (in playcentre this could be through reducing volunteer work and becoming more inclusive of different cultures), extension of existing centres or establishment of new centres. The MOE expects that new centres will be built in this locality but decisions about buildings have not been finalised.

Quality

Teaching and learning processes

Overall, the ratings of process quality in Pohutakawa were around the medium mark, with some particularly low scoring services. The widest variation between services was evident in relation to children's interactions with each other, and emphasis on culture and inclusion. There were some low ratings also for the focus on early literacy, mathematics, problem solving and creativity.

The locality was rated moderately high for teacher/educators using Te Whāriki as their curriculum, understanding the concepts and demonstrating its use, with variability between services. All services were supported to implement Te Whāriki through professional development and training. Potential problems identified in respect to implementation should Te Whāriki be legislated were difficulties for unqualified staff who do not understand it, and needs for non-contact time, better teaching and learning resources and space, and professional support to work through the bicultural aspects. Playcentre participants were concerned that legislating Te Whāriki could increase demands on playcentre volunteers.

Overall in this locality

- There is strong professional support with most teacher/educators participating in a range of courses or whole service professional development over the previous 12 months and having access to an umbrella organisation offering external support;
- Assessment is collaborative, based on data collection and linked to Te Whāriki;
- Planning related to the education programme and children is being undertaken; and
- Self review on teaching learning and development, adult communication and collaboration and organisational management is being undertaken.

Time and expertise were the main issues identified by teachers in relation to assessment. Overall there was very little paid non-contact time.

Structural quality

Ratios
Three of the eight services sometimes had difficulties meeting their service requirements with respect to ratios. In addition, three of the teacher-led services experienced some problems getting qualified relievers, because there is not a pool of qualified relievers in this locality.

Qualifications – teacher-led services
Pohutakawa had the most difficulties of any locality with respect to meeting qualification requirements. Services had sufficient qualified teachers to meet current requirements, but the two education and care centres and the two

licensed Pasifika centres would find it hard to meet 2005 and subsequent targets[14]. For three of these, issues were associated with the cultural emphasis within the service:

- Difficulties in finding registered teachers or training refugee and migrant women who were able to work and communicate with refugee and migrant families (Education and care centre for refugee and migrant families). The supervisor thought the qualification requirements were inappropriate for this centre, since the centre employs migrant women to work in the centre alongside qualified teachers. It is hard for these women to undertake training because of lack of confidence in English language fluency, but they play an invaluable role.
- Getting a Pacific teacher qualified in time (one Pasifika centre), finding a registered Pacific teacher to act as registration supervisor and provide mentoring (two Pasifika centres), and paying Pacific teachers adequately (two Pasifika centres).

The other education and care centre identified a shortage of "quality people" coming out of training programmes, and difficulties in finding registration supervisors.

Qualifications - parent and whānau-led
The kōhanga reo and playcentre had high turnover of families creating a need for more people to train, and some difficulties in encouraging people to train. Issues in kōhanga reo were losing qualified staff and finding relievers to cover for staff in training. Issues in playcentre were few parents undertaking playcentre training beyond Course 1, making it hard for the playcentre to meet the qualification points requirement.

The Pasifika playgroup, however, had two qualified Pacific teachers even though there was not a qualification requirement for the playgroup.

Professional and leadership support
There were a range of professional development providers and organisations offering leadership support in this locality. Overall, services in the locality had high ratings on the indicator of strength of professional development and adequacy of support for leadership. The Pasifika centres were putting emphasis on training rather than professional development.

The MOE needs assessment for Pohutakawa pinpointed staff recruitment and retention as key issues. Issues were:

- the need for Pohutakawa to be promoted as a good place to work;
- staff needs for professional development or training in respect to the curriculum and teaching practice;
- in Pasifika centres, understanding the registration process, accessing a registration supervisor who is appropriate and fair, and accessing professional development.

There are pressures in respect to the strategic plan goal of raising quality: Meeting qualification requirements and accessing appropriate registration supervisors will be problematic for education and care and Pasifika centres, and parent and whānau-led services have difficulty in respect to their service requirements. Finding staff who are competent to provide an education programme that meets parents' cultural aspirations is a further challenge. If

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[14] 2005 – all persons responsible are required to be registered teachers; 2007 – 50% of regulated staffing to be registered teachers; 2010 – 80% of regulated staffing to be registered teachers or services can count teachers studying for an NZTC approved qualification as up to 10% of the 80% requirement; 2012 – all regulated staff to be registered teachers or at least 70% of regulated staff to be registered teachers and the remainder to be studying for an NZTC approved qualification.

services are unable to meet requirements and are not sustainable, there will be further shortage of provision in this locality.

The medium overall ratings and some particularly low scoring services on indicators of process quality show there is room for professional development on most aspects.

Collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education

Relationships with parents in the interests of children

This locality had a moderate rating on strength of relationship with parents. Teacher/educators provided opportunities for parents to be involved in planning and assessment and 46 percent of parents said they were involved in this way. Some parents were following up activities at home. One service was finding non-written ways to communicate with ESOL parents, since there were language barriers. A higher percentage of parents (49 percent) wanted more opportunity to talk with their child's teacher than in other localities.

Relationship with schools to support transition

Overall, relationships with schools were poor, with two services having no connection. Apart from the kōhanga reo which shared resources and networked with the kura, and a Pasifika centre where parents often transitioned with their children to work at the school as teacher aides, the only connection was through the ECE service visiting the school. The education and care centre for migrant and refugee families wanted to organise a parents' evening with a representative from each school to discuss transition.

Relationships with ECE services for mutual support

Relationships with other ECE services were associated with opportunities for services of the same type or cultural affiliation to get together as a group, or because children attended more than one type. Teacher/educators wanted stronger relationships for sharing information and professional support. A community initiative to bring services together was being organised.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and GSE

Relationships with the range of health, Plunket, and immunisation services in this locality were moderately strong but variable, with one centre having no contact. Participants in two centres thought onsite health services would provide better health support for children and their families. Only one service reported a relationship with GSE.

Relationships with Māori and iwi

Only the kōhanga reo had strong relationships with community, hapu and iwi, with four of the seven other services describing a small relationship building. The seven non-kōhanga reo services wanted the relationship to be stronger, but either did not have Māori children attending or did not know how to go about building a relationship or which marae to approach. Kindergarten participants suggested a Māori adviser would be useful.

Relationships with Pacific communities

Only the Pasifika centres had strong relationships with Pacific communities. The kōhanga reo had administrative relationships with a Tongan language nest. The other services would like to develop relationships further, but either did not have Pacific children attending or did not know how to go about building a relationship. Kindergarten teachers suggested a multi-cultural centre with advice, support and resources would be useful.

Kowhai

Kowhai is another urban ward. It has somewhat higher proportions of Māori and Pacific people than the national average; individual median wage slightly below the national median, and high unemployment. Eighty percent of new entrants had some ECE experience, slightly below the average for this study. Māori and Pacific rates were around the average for this sample.

Kowhai ward had 67 ECE services; 7 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 27:   **Kowhai service types**

Service type	N=67	Sample
Kindergarten	8	1
Kōhanga reo	8	1
Playcentre	4	1
Education and care	44	2
Home-based	2	1
Pasifika	1	1

No services have closed in the last two years. Thirty of the 67 services were privately owned. Forty seven provided full day ECE, and 20, sessional ECE. Most of these services (97 percent) were open for at least 40 weeks of the 2003–04 year. There was one non response. Thirty two percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 15 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 50 percent, between 50–52 weeks.

Enrolment patterns, regularity of attendance, and waiting lists patterns were average for the eight wards.

Participation and provision

Kowhai has the lowest participation rates in this geographical region

Information from parents responding in Kowhai showed in comparison with other localities:

- More parents (36 percent) were in paid work than all but one other locality.
- Kowhai parents were somewhat more likely to emphasise getting their child ready for school, and allowing parents to work or train, and do other things.
- Parents placed somewhat more emphasis on their child's ECE service having a good ERO report, not being too expensive, having hours that suit, being close to their work or home, and having an attractive building and space.
- Satisfaction levels were somewhat lower, and parents were less likely to say their needs for a good ERO report in their child's ECE service were met well.
- Forty-one percent had difficulty affording ECE, the highest percentage of all localities.

A prime reason for non-participation in ECE is insufficient places for all families wanting their child to attend. MOE Promoting Participation Projects in Kowhai in 2001 and 2002 have been problematic: there has not been anywhere to place some children, and other children who were placed in licence-exempt groups that later closed did not sustain their participation.

The MOE is hoping to expand capacity by providing funds for three or four new centres by the end of 2005. In addition, capacity of sample services should expand after building renovations to the education and care centre and to the kōhanga reo, and if the Pasifika centre is able to extend its buildings. However, kindergarten participants thought they would reduce the kindergarten roll size and retain current staffing levels, rather than increase staffing, if regulatory change improves adult:child ratios. This would reduce the kindergarten capacity. Further solutions to increasing provision of places could occur if the home-based service could recruit more caregivers and the playcentre more qualified staff. Support for such initiatives would be an indirect way to increase capacity, but these are not part of the strategic plan.

A further barrier to participation in Kowhai, poverty and cost of ECE participation, could be positively influenced by changes in the childcare subsidies, provision of free ECE to 3- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led ECE services from 2007, and changes in funding levels if these reduce cost to families.

Quality
Teaching and learning processes
Overall, quality ratings were around the medium mark but with wide variability between services. The MOE representative interview also remarked on the variability in quality in this locality.

While all services were using Te Whāriki as their curriculum, knowledge of assessment practices, the need for Pasifika resources and translation of Te Whāriki into Pacific languages, training and professional development for working with children with special needs, and having sufficient qualified teachers were issues that Kowhai teacher/educators raised in respect to Te Whāriki. Issues about time, the knowledge base of educators and the need to access professional development were the main issues in relation to assessment, planning and evaluation. All services but one undertook some form of self-review, some more formal and deeper than others. Although the teacher-led services all had some paid non-contact time, most spent unpaid time on assessment, planning, and evaluation.

Structural quality
Ratios
All services could reach the required ratios currently but the kōhanga reo, education and care centre, and Pasifika centre found themselves vulnerable at times of sickness. Administration staff or parents and whānau were called in.

Qualifications – teacher-led services
While current and 2005 qualification requirements could be met, there could be difficulties in reaching the qualification targets for 2007. Services identified the following issues:

- difficulties in getting qualified relievers and competition for graduates (kindergarten);
- finding a registration supervisor in new kindergartens if none of the teachers are fully registered (kindergarten);
- understanding the registration process, wanting registration information in their Pacific language, finding a registration supervisor from their own ethnic group (Pasifika);
- cost of training (education and care and Pasifika staff);
- meeting qualification targets (Pasifika);
- shortage of "quality" staff (education and care);

- finding staff with specialist training who are sensitive to working with children with disabilities and their families (early intervention);
- possible competition for registered teachers (home-based).

The MOE representative interviewed said that while some education and care centres were getting their staff upskilled, some teachers were being recruited through higher pay rates to move to other centres.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led
Lack of relievers and reliance on goodwill of kaumatua and whānau produced strains for the kōhanga reo in meeting qualification requirements. Issues were that training was being done outside paid work time and there is concern that qualified staff will move to better paid jobs in other services.

Playcentre had similar issues to other playcentres in this study with respect to qualifications: difficulty in maintaining training levels because of the turnover of parents and the necessity to continually train new parents, and time-consuming voluntary administrative work.

Professional and leadership support
All services had access to a range of professional development opportunities, including support from national organisations and colleges of education, and all except the Pasifika service had access to a wider umbrella support structure.

The MOE representative interviewed thought poor management and governance were issues for Pasifika services and kōhanga reo.

Collaborative relationships
Cohesion of education
Relationships with parents in the interests of children
Kowhai parents responding were more likely than in most localities to talk to their child's teacher/educator at least once a week. Thirty percent of parents would like more opportunity to talk with their child's teacher/educators, with lower proportions in playcentre and the Pasifika services. The main thing parents talked to the teacher/educator about was the child's progress, interests and abilities, followed by their child's behaviour. Playcentre parents were most likely to discuss their child's learning and the curriculum. There was variability in the extent of parental involvement in assessment and planning for their child.

All services had issues about collaboration with parents. Apart from playcentre where time was an issue, teacher/educators in other services had questions particularly about how to involve parents. In relation to the strategic plan, these findings suggest the exemplar material on involving parents in assessment may provide a useful resource, especially if accompanied by professional development.

Relationship with schools to support transition
Services all had some relationship with schools involving transition visits, the kōhanga reo had a "developing" relationship with a local kura, and resource teachers from the early intervention centre transition through to school with their children, but had little to do with mainstream schools. The number of schools in the locality made it hard to have relationships with all of them. Kindergarten teachers had a close professional relationship with new entrant teachers, with some sharing developmentally appropriate pedagogical approaches, but would like to see primary teachers having professional development on Te Whāriki. While one education and care centre thought it

best not to pass on information about children to the school, kindergarten teachers wanted primary teachers to discuss and use the children's kindergarten portfolio and reported resistance from some teachers to doing this.

Relationships with ECE services for mutual support
There was not a lot of contact between different ECE services of different types in this locality, and some competition and strained relationships between some, except for the Early Intervention centre where children often had dual enrolments with a community ECE centre whose Education Support Workers were professionally supported by the Early Intervention Centre. Some services thought it would be advantageous to develop this relationship.

Integrated services
Relationships with health and GSE
All services had productive relationships with local health services with health professionals visiting to check children's health. Greater collaboration to provide access to parent support for health within the ECE centre could work in the interests of children and families. An issue for the Early Intervention Centre was parents having to choose between community therapists and the centre's therapists when they needed both.

ECE services seemed to be well served by GSE, including through their provision of Education Support Workers, and parent education workshops for playcentre parents.

Relationships with Māori and iwi
There were strong relationships with Māori and iwi for kōhanga reo, playcentre (an association Māori whānau group and links with the marae) and the Early Intervention Centre (Māori social worker, Māori whānau group, and Māori resources). Other services had no relationships—in one teachers lacked confidence, in another the manager gave equal attention to all cultures, and in a third the manager would like to recruit a Māori caregiver.

Relationships with Pacific communities
Pacific teachers linked with their Pacific community through the church and PIECCA. Others had links with Pacific families rather than communities and wanted to develop these further or employ Pacific staff, except for the education and care centre whose manager thought there was no need because they did not have many Pacific children.

Karaka

Karaka ward is in a small town in a rural area. It has a slightly higher Māori population than the national average, and few Pacific people. The individual median income is slightly below the national average, but the unemployment rate is also slightly below. Ninety-eight percent of new entrants had had some ECE experience, Māori as well as European/Pākehā.

Karaka ward had 16 ECE services; 5 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 28: **Karaka service types**

Service type	N=16	Sample
Kindergarten	3	1
Kōhanga reo	3	1
Playcentre	2	1
Education and care	4	1
Home-based	4	1

No services have closed in the last two years. Four of the 16 services were privately owned. Thirteen provided full day ECE, and 3, sessional ECE. Most of these services (93 percent) were open for at least 40 weeks of the 2003–04 year. There was one non response, and one that opened for 39 weeks. Thirty three percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 13 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 47 percent, between 50–52 weeks.

Waiting lists were slightly lower than the average for the eight localities. They were slightly higher for ages 3 and 4. Eighty-nine percent of enrolled children attended ECE services (excluding kōhanga reo) regularly.

Participation and provision

In 2004, almost all European, and 84 percent of Māori new entrants had had some ECE experience in this area. Most 4-year-olds attending the sample services had more than one year ECE experience in total, but less than two years.

There were two key participation issues:

- lower participation of Māori children.
- Irregular attendance. This locality had the lowest rating on the indicator of regularity of attendance of all eight localities. Children's attendance was irregular from week to week, and also unstable, with children coming and going to and from some services.

Participation in ECE, regularity and stability of ECE attendance, and parent and whānau choice of service are quite closely linked to patterns of parental employment and factors associated with the rurality of Karaka, including seasonal work. The distance of rural families from ECE services in the local township makes travel necessary and is costly—this creates issues for participation, with some rural families wanting their child to attend town services for one or two days only and for longer periods on each day.

All services had spare places and no waiting lists for new children, except for the kindergarten. The kindergarten was trying to respond to parental needs with respect to opening times and preferences for days of attendance.

Information from parents responding showed in comparison with other localities:

- Karaka had the highest rate of dual attendance, and was one of four localities where dual attendance increased with age.
- Parents who wanted different times were more likely to want their child to attend every day of the week and during school hours.
- Parents were less likely to rate child gets ready for school, parent can work or train, and parent can learn about child development as very important reasons for their child's attendance;

- Parents were less likely to rate qualified staff as a very important ECE characteristic, but also less likely to rate that their need for qualified staff and for the service having a good reputation was very well met;
- Parents were less likely to talk with their child's teacher about their child, and less likely to talk about their child's behaviour and what they can do to help their child.

In playcentre, parents thought parent learning and support was very important but parents were under pressure from a high volunteer workload that had created barriers to participation in the adult education and training programme and running the playcentre. If playcentre becomes unsustainable, participation would be likely to decrease for under 3-year-olds in this locality because there is limited alternative provision for this age group. As well, parents may be unable to access from other services the level of parent learning and support that they are wanting.

Distinctions between the education and care centre and kindergartens in this locality are becoming blurred with respect to operating hours since the three extended day kindergartens have hours that closely match those of the education and care centre and schools. Whether the sample kindergarten also extends its session times may depend on whether the new funding arrangements enable its changed operation to be financially viable. Reductions in capacity could occur in kindergartens following any reductions in ratio requirements. Extended session times and the 20 hours free provision in teacher-led ECE services from July 2007 could make kindergarten even more attractive to parents, creating further demand, but without places to cater for new users.

Only the home-based service was operating beyond school hours. While this service did not have participation issues, there were issues about curriculum implementation, caregiver training and low quality in educational programme aspects. Unless these are addressed, there is risk that children of parents needing full day education and care will spend many hours in low quality provision.

The actions being undertaken by the MOE of analysing overall participation levels, with the possibility of targeting actions to Māori families where participation is lower or supporting a kōhanga reo to become licensed, will not address all the underlying factors contributing to irregular participation and non-participation in this locality. Support for existing services to respond to family preferences and needs with respect to times for their child's attendance, for playcentre to address its sustainability issues (common to all the playcentres in this study), and support to strengthen te reo and tikanga Māori teaching and learning in kōhanga reo could boost provision and participation.

Quality

Teaching and learning processes

The overall typical quality was medium to high. Services were doing best in providing an environment where children had opportunity to concentrate and complete work, and where children display purposeful involvement in learning activities.

The main areas where children's experience and play could be strengthened were in aspects of the education programme, interactions and environment focused on early literacy, mathematics, problem solving and creativity. In addition, teachers' description of their own role in implementing Te Whāriki and process quality ratings showed services were low or average for adults scaffolding and co-constructing learning, and adding complexity and challenge for children.

While Te Whāriki was being used in most services, teacher/educators had difficulties in describing the main concepts, and some regarded it as complex and hard to understand. This locality had the highest rating of all localities on the indicator of future problems if Te Whāriki is legislated. Problems with respect to access to professional development or training, teacher/educator understanding of Te Whāriki, time for implementation and resources to support implementation were predicted. Similar problems with respect to assessment, planning and evaluation were prevalent. Self-review was only occurring in some services.

Teaching and learning resources were generally of good quality in this locality.

Structural quality

Ratios
Only the kōhanga reo had difficulties in meeting current ratios and predicted difficulties in the future caused by the turnover of whānau and difficulty in getting relievers.

Qualifications – teacher-led services
ECE teacher-led centres were meeting current qualification requirements. Although not assisted with paid leave or support for study, a positive result of the qualification requirements for teacher-led services was the impetus the plan gave one education and care centre staff member to train. However, the pool of qualified teachers in this locality is small and finding qualified relievers may be an ongoing problem if not addressed.

Karaka was rated low on the indicator of having enough qualified and registered teachers to meet requirements in two years time, but this was an issue only for the education and care centre. The centre did not provide financial or professional support for staff to study or train, and the manager saw herself as reliant on recruiting new staff with qualifications to meet future requirements.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led services
Kōhanga reo and playcentre were struggling to meet current qualification requirements and predict this will be an ongoing problem because of the high turnover of parents and whānau and the need for ongoing training of new parents. Underlying issues were:

- Qualifications are not recognised beyond service types so undertaking training does not provide a career path.
- The high volunteer workload in playcentre discussed above deters parents from taking on training.
- There are low rates of pay for qualified supervisors in playcentre and kaiako in kōhanga reo.

Collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education

Relationship with parents in the interests of children
Except for playcentre parents, the main aspects of relationship with parents that could be strengthened were involving parents in assessment, planning and evaluation, and parents following up on activities at home. Finding time was regarded as a main barrier to developing strong relationships.

Relationships with schools to support transition
There were variable relationships with schools, with one service having a "joined up" approach to service provision made possible by sharing buildings and grounds, and the new entrant teacher being interested in ECE

and sharing teaching sessions. None of the other services shared information about children when they went to school, discussed pedagogy or shared professional development.

Relationships between ECE services for mutual support

There were variable relationships between ECE services, ranging from no relationship to services meeting together with others of their own type for mutual support and professional development, and sharing information and support with other types. The community-owned centres that had an umbrella organisation were distinctly better able to do this.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and GSE

ECE services had productive relationships with health services in the interests of children and families. Health services were available when they were needed and of good quality. This was because of a strong Primary Health Organisation (PHO) and established health professional visits to ECE centres.

Participants raised issues of concern about working with GSE. Shorter wait times for referrals, more special support hours for specific children, and access to speech language therapy were wanted.

Relationships with Māori and iwi

Only the kōhanga reo had strong relationships with iwi. Apart from the kindergarten having a relationship with the school bilingual unit which gave support for te reo and tikanga Māori, no other services had such connections. All except the home-based service and the kōhanga reo would like the relationships to be stronger to support the curriculum. Not having opportunity and having insufficient confidence were reasons why they were not.

Relationships with Pacific communities

The kōhanga reo had Cook Islands children attending the kōhanga reo, and these also attended a Kuki Arini group to "find out about their Kuki Arini side". No others had relationships with Pacific communities.

Totara

Totara is another small town-rural ward. It has a slightly higher proportion of Māori, a lower than median individual income, and higher unemployment. Ninety-four percent of new entrants had had some ECE attendance, including 96 percent of Māori new entrants. Waiting lists were lower than for other localities, though higher for children under two. Regularity of attendance was average for the eight localities.

Totara ward had 9 ECE services; 5 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 29: **Totara service types**

Service type	N=9	Sample
Kindergarten	1	1
Kōhanga reo	4	1
Playcentre	1	1
Education and care	3	2

No services have closed in the last two years. One of the 9 services were privately owned. Seven provided full day ECE, and 2, sessional ECE. (Information for two was not available). All the services were open for at least 40

weeks of the 2003–04 year. Fifty seven percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 43 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and none between 50–52 weeks.

Participation and provision

Participation in ECE in Totara ward was high, and attendance was average for the eight localities.

The expansion of a tertiary education provider in this locality has led to more families with preschool children coming to study for both short and long term courses. A new Māori immersion centre was opened in 2004, but the MOE considers there is still limited capacity to cater for all families who want their child to attend. MOE thought another need was for full time places for children whose parents are in paid employment.

Families in Totara have a range of opportunities for ECE and family support starting from infancy, except for home-based provision. There were waiting lists for the sample kindergarten and kōhanga reo, and some parental dissatisfaction with not being able to get the days or times that were wanted in kindergarten. Kōhanga reo would like to take more children but were constrained by being unable to recruit kaimahi. The kindergarten association was aware that some families were seeking five-hour sessions, but association representatives said they were constrained by the rules for receiving the higher kindergarten Rate 3 funding which specified a maximum four-hour session. In fact, sessions can be longer than four hours, but there is a rule that individual children can only attend sessional services for up to four hours per session. There was also a funding rule (that no longer exists) that services could only receive the highest rate of funding for a maximum 1080 hours per year.

The sample education and care centres and playcentres were operating below capacity. Having to have children toilet-trained was thought to be a barrier to participation in one centre, and cost in the other. Like other localities, volunteer workload was a reason for non-participation in playcentre. In addition, travel was required for advanced playcentre courses, and cost and time were barriers. Education and care centre parents were more likely to have difficulty affording their child's ECE service and to have a childcare subsidy for their child than other parents, but were also paying more.

Information from parents responding in Totara showed in comparison with other localities:

- A lower proportion of parents wanted their child to attend so that the parent could do other things.
- A lower proportion of parents were using more than one ECE service.
- A higher percentage of parents were not in paid employment.
- Playcentre parents in comparison with playcentre parents in other localities were less likely to rate their service as very good.

In respect to the strategic plan goals, the main shifts in sample service provision to sustain participation would be service specific shifts to enable greater responsiveness to parental needs. There were threats and opportunities for the future arising from the provision of 20 hours free ECE in teacher-led community-owned ECE services: for the private education and care centre[15] manager, fearfulness that the centre would be at a disadvantage especially if a community-owned education and care service opened; and for the kindergarten association manager, views that kindergarten may need to change to full day and charge fees for part of the day. No specific actions were being planned.

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[15] The "20 hours free ECE" policy was extended to all teacher-led services, including privately owned services, in June 2005 after data for this phase was collected

MOE is planning a network analysis by 2007 in the wider region, including Totara.

Quality

Teaching and learning processes

MOE staff thought the main issue with respect to quality in this locality was a fairly low level of quality for licence-exempt groups. The MOE was supporting playgroups to understand "what quality looks like" and how interactions may be improved. Playgroups were not in the study sample.

This locality was second highest of all localities for sample services on the overall rating of process quality. Quality rating scores were between medium and high, with some services scoring slightly below medium in relation to a focus on literacy, mathematics, problem-solving and creativity, or providing an environment where tikanga Māori was evident, children's culture was valued and all children were included.

Teacher/educators were using Te Whāriki as their curriculum. There was variability between services as to whether there would be problems if Te Whāriki was legislated. Problems that were identified were the complexity of Te Whāriki and difficulties for untrained people in interpreting it in ways that are consistent with what is known about good teaching practice, insufficient time to do observations, access to a wider range of professional support beyond the service's own structures and to te reo Māori resources (one service each). Teacher/educators in one service had only one concern: that Te Whāriki should not be changed and there should be no pressure to test children. These issues were not ones that were being addressed at a local level by individual services.

All services were undertaking assessment, planning, evaluation and self review. Thirty-one percent of parents overall said they were asked by staff to take part in planning and assessment. Insufficient time was an issue for all services. Planning and assessment seemed to be activities that took place outside paid work time. Other issues were: a desire for all staff to understand assessment resources (one service), and uncertainty about whether the service was "on the right track" with respect to assessment.

Structural quality

Ratios

The five services usually met the adult:child ratios relevant to them, but not without drawing on additional support, or in one case reducing groups. The kōhanga reo had sometimes had to close because it could not meet the ratio. One service had insufficient adults to children to meet regulated staffing requirements in the study observations.

Qualifications – teacher-led services

There were good options for field-based training, and access to registration supervisors was locally available. The tertiary education provider was to offer an ECE degree course from July 2005 and MOE staff thought this would impact on ECE services through students requiring places, emphasis on te reo and tikanga Māori and supply of teachers to work in Māori immersion settings.

All services were able to meet targets for qualified and registered teachers for 2005 and 2007, if current staff remained, but had difficulties in getting qualified relievers. The education and care centres both encouraged staff to train and had staff in training. The private education and care centre manager was concerned about competing with kindergarten teacher salaries and worried about recruitment if staff left. She was considering paying off student loans as a recruitment incentive.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led

The parent- and whānau-led services had high turnover of families, creating a need for more people to train, and some difficulties in encouraging people to undertake their service specific training.

Kōhanga reo whānau had a view that expectations for whānau to provide an adequate training environment for kaiako and kaimahi presented difficulties, and a concern that qualified kaiako would move to better paid jobs. Other issues for kōhanga reo were: difficulty in getting relievers, a desire for outside support and information on relevant training, better funding to enable pay parity, and professional development specific to kōhanga reo. These issues were regarded as national issues.

Playcentres were struggling to have enough trained people but the association was helping to fast track training for playcentres that needed it. Travel was required for participation in Course 3 and Course 4 and this was a barrier. The training grant covered only one third of the cost of training, and funds for training had to be taken out of the service bulk grant.

Professional and leadership support

All ECE services had ongoing professional development and support for leadership. At the community meeting, ECE service participants expressed an interest in networking and participating in combined professional development.

MOE actions

The MOE is not planning any specific actions with respect to quality in this locality, although its advice and support co-ordinator is available to work intensively with centres deemed to be at risk. MOE staff said that the proposed requirement for services to re-license every six years may help the MOE identify issues.

Collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education

Relationships with parents in the interests of children

This locality had a moderate to high rating on the strength of relationships with parents. Teacher/educators provided opportunities for parents to be involved in planning and assessment, but three services thought parents did not want more involvement. Thirty-one percent of parents said they were involved in this way, with involvement highest for playcentre and lowest for kindergarten parents. Parents were providing volunteer help in playcentre, kōhanga reo and kindergarten. The main thing parents talked to the teacher/educator about was the child's progress, interests and abilities, followed by their child's behaviour. Forty eight percent of parents talked about how they could help the child at home.

Relationship with schools to support transition

All ECE services except one had reciprocal relationships, involving two-way visits, with at least one school (the kura for the kōhanga reo) in the locality. One of the education and care centres struggled to visit because it was hard to get relieving staff to cover during a visit.

Relationships with ECE services for mutual support

Comments made at the community meeting indicated that the ECE services in Totara did not collaborate, and related only to ECE services of their own type. This was backed up in the interviews, but there was a more optimistic note in that most teachers felt it was important to develop relationships between services (playcentre, education and care, and kindergarten). The MOE pouwhakataki co-ordinated the establishment of a network of all ECE services in this area following the community meeting.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and GSE

All services reported having productive relationships with health agencies in the interests of children's health, with health professionals visiting the centre-based services to check children's health. Other aspects of the relationship were health agency staff being invited to professional development, formal meetings and informal functions with kindergarten teachers to ensure a complete service was provided to meet children's needs; and playcentre disseminating information to parents about health services. Education and care teachers would like a register of health services to know what services were available.

Relationships with Group Special Education were important and were working reasonably well, except in the case of one education and care centre which reported there were problems of communication and not enough support for all the cases they had.

Relationships with Māori and iwi

All services except education and care centres in this locality had a relationship with Māori and iwi:

- The kōhanga reo had strong relationships with hapu/iwi and also with the wananga that has a local presence, and these were described as very interconnected.
- The kindergarten had relationships with Māori through the local iwi, individual families, the church, and the local runanga, and they had also visited the wananga. The purpose was to operate as an organisation that reflected the Treaty.
- The playcentre also had relations with Māori but mainly through the kōhanga reo. They had some Māori families who were from other parts of the country, and who were not affiliated with the local iwi, but teachers considered that relationship building with the iwi was important.

Education and care teachers would like the relationships to be stronger to support the curriculum. The reasons why they were not stronger were not having any Māori contacts, and sensitivity over how to begin relationships.

Relationships with Pacific communities

Only the kindergarten had a connection with the local Samoan community through a mother of ex-kindergarten children who was doing ECE training through the Samoan church, and undertaking practical experience for her training at the kindergarten. They would like to develop this further. The playcentre and one of the education and care centres would like to develop relationships with the Tongan and Samoan communities.

Nikau

Nikau is predominantly European/Pākehā, with very low proportions of Māori and Pacific people. Individual median income is slightly below the median individual income for all New Zealand. It has a low unemployment rate, and a growing population. Ninety-one percent of new entrants were said to have had some ECE experience on entering school, which was higher than three of the other seven wards in the study.

Nikau ward had 11 ECE services; 5 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 30: **Nikau service types**

Service type	N=11	Sample
Kindergarten	2	1
Kōhanga reo	1	1
Playcentre	2	1
Education and care	6	2

Waiting lists were about average for the eight localities, but higher at ages 3 and 4. Regularity of attendance was also about average.

No services have closed in the last two years. Four of the 11 services were privately owned. Seven provided full day ECE, and 4, sessional ECE. All services were open for at least 40 weeks of the 2003–04 year. Sixty-four percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 9 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 27 percent, between 50–52 weeks.

Participation and provision

A key issue was limited provision of kindergarten and education and care service places, which in turn affected the age children started these services.

- There were large waiting lists in both kindergartens in the locality, and some current parents could not get the days or time that were wanted.
- There were waiting lists for morning places in the two education and care centres, but spare places in the afternoon.
- There was insufficient provision for under-twos and all-day ECE for families wanting to work.

Information from Nikau parents responding showed:

- Nikau was one of four localities where children were more likely to attend more than one ECE service and where dual attendance increased with age.
- Nikau parents were twice as likely (16 percent) to say they were on a waiting list.
- Parents were more likely to want their child to attend morning sessions.
- Parents were least likely to work full-time.
- Parents were less likely to rate their own needs to work or train (22 percent), have opportunity to meet others (3 percent) and help at the ECE centre (6 percent) as very important.
- Parents were more likely to spend time helping or working in their child's ECE service

● Nikau parents were less likely to rate their ECE services as very good (this is very interesting given the overall higher levels of quality found for this locality, as noted below).

Wait time was more than six months for the education and care and kindergarten places. One reason for afternoon places in education and care centres not being used was the large number of children who attended kindergarten for the afternoon session. The building of a new kindergarten in this locality will take pressure off the kindergartens and there should be sufficient places to avoid a lengthy wait time. However, insufficient places for under-twos remains an issue.

Kōhanga reo had stable rolls. It had a waiting list for under-twos, but did not currently cater for them. Playcentre rolls fluctuated and playcentres were not working to capacity. Parents were under pressure from the high volunteer workload and found it hard to meet requirements with respect to playcentre qualifications.

The strategic plan action of providing free ECE for 3- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led ECE services is the main initiative that may impact on participation in Nikau.

● The pattern of dual usage of kindergarten and education and care may not alter since parents did not commonly identify cost as a reason for the dual attendance. Parental reasons for using kindergarten were largely about the kindergarten programme, preparation for school and children socialising with others in the same age group.

● There could be parental pressure to extend kindergarten session times to cover the school day following the free ECE provision for children aged 3 and 4. This could mean a reduction in the number of kindergarten places, and also in dual enrolments.

● Playcentre participants predicted that playcentre could lose its 3- and 4-year-olds to teacher-led services.

● Kindergarten management predicted that 5-year-olds with developmental delay would be disadvantaged since they would not be eligible for the allocation of free ECE.

In addition, teachers from one education and care centre thought that if the age bands change through regulatory change, the centre may not be able to provide for 2-year-olds because of additional staffing required for this age group.

The regional MOE staff regarded the impact of regulations such as changes to ratios and space allocations as potentially putting pressure on kindergartens and other services. The MOE is monitoring participation and provision. It was helping the kōhanga reo to relocate.

Quality
Teaching and learning processes
This locality had the highest overall rating on the combined ratings of process quality. Services had a high average rating for learning environments where children have opportunity to concentrate and complete work, and display purposeful involvement in learning episodes. None had low ratings.

There were no very low ratings. However, the main aspects where children's experience and play could be strengthened were children's interactions with each other, including tuakana teina relationships and children co-constructing learning. Aspects of the education programme, interactions and environment focused on early literacy, mathematics, problem solving and creativity was an area where no services were rated very high.

Teacher/educators used Te Whāriki as their curriculum. This locality had the highest rating of all localities on the indicator that there would be no problems in implementing Te Whāriki if it is legislated. Those who did identify problems were addressing them through training (kōhanga reo), encouraging use of Te Whāriki in the session (playcentre), and advocating through the association for exemplars of bicultural practice and the importance of retaining flexibility of professional judgement (kindergarten).

This locality also had the highest ratings of all localities on indicators that:

● There is strong professional support with most teacher/educators participating in a range of courses or whole service professional development over the previous 12 months and having access to an umbrella organisation offering external support;
● Assessment is collaborative, based on data collection and linked to Te Whāriki;
● Planning related to the education programme and children is being undertaken; and
● Self review on teaching learning and development, adult communication and collaboration and organisational management is being undertaken.

In general discussion at the community meeting, service participants were keen to extend professional development opportunities through combined professional development with ECE services of other types and schools.

All services except kōhanga reo, had paid non-contact time. Staff also spent several extra unpaid hours per week over and above this time for assessment, planning, evaluation and self review. There was some concern by kindergarten participants that if kindergarten extended its day following free ECE there could be less non-contact time.

Structural quality

Ratios
There were no problems in meeting required ratios and no predicted problems.

Qualifications – teacher-led services
Services had sufficient registered and qualified teachers currently and to meet 2005 and 2007 requirements if staff stayed. Education and care centre b found it hard to attract staff and find relievers. Issues raised with respect to teacher registration were:

Concerns about the quality of advice and guidance offered by newly registered teachers acting as registration supervisors;
Variation in the quality of registration advice and guidance programmes.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led services
Both playcentre and kōhanga reo had people in training and were meeting requirements. However, they each had high turnover of families, creating a need for more people to train, and some difficulties in encouraging people to undertake their service specific training. Issues raised with respect to training were:

● Insufficient funding to pay for tutors, the need for higher pay rates (and more government funding) to pay parity rates for playcentre supervisors, amount of unrecognised volunteer time (playcentre);
● Insufficient funding for training and to pay kaiako appropriately, the need for ongoing upskilling of whānau to learn te reo and understand kōhanga reo kaupapa, and high levels of volunteer work in running the kōhanga reo programme and undertaking training (kōhanga reo).

Collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education

Relationships with parents in the interests of children

Most parents were satisfied with the information they received about their child, and their opportunity to talk with their child's ECE staff. However 38 percent would like more information, and 34 percent, more opportunity to talk with the ECE staff. Only 36 percent had been asked to be involved in planning and assessment for their child. Perhaps involving parents more in this would cater for some parents' desire to talk to the teacher more and have more details about their child.

Relationships with schools to support transition

Relationships with schools in support of children's transition were rated as highest of all localities. ECE services had strong relationships with one local school in particular, having reciprocal visits, discussing information, starting to share pedagogical information. There was a desire for combined professional development.

Relationships between ECE services for mutual support

Services were meeting together with others of their own type for mutual support and professional development, and there was some sharing information and support between services of different types.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and GSE

Health and GSE were the two key agencies with which ECE services had relationships, although kōhanga reo had wider relationships with social services, and playcentre with parenting services. ECE services had productive relationships with health services which visited them to check children's health and supported parents who were under stress. In general discussion at the community meeting it was suggested that it would be good to have co-ordination of health and parenting services. There were some concerns about GSE:

long waits for speech language assessments (kindergarten);
insufficient one-to-one support or qualified caregivers (education and care).

Relationships with Māori and iwi

Only the kōhanga reo had strong relationships with Māori and iwi. Kindergarten and playcentre were the only other services describing a relationship with Māori:

- The kindergarten had worked with two kuia in the past, and was planning a Māori language week activity.
- The playcentre association had formed a Māori working party to lead them to collaborate further.

All services would like the relationships to be stronger. Having few Māori parents and being unsure about how to go about building a relationship were reasons why the non-kōhanga reo services found this difficult.

Relationships with Pacific communities

No services had relationships with Pacific communities and participants did not consider this important because there were no Pacific children attending these services.

Rata

Rata ward is city-based, and predominantly European/Pākehā. It had the second highest median individual income of the eight wards in the study, and an unemployment rate slightly above the national rate.

Ninety-six percent of new entrants had attended some ECE before they started school, the second highest rate of the eight wards. However, Māori new entrants had lower participation rates than their European/Pākehā peers in this ward.

Regularity of attendance was also high. Waiting lists were about average, but higher for children under three years of age, particularly those aged under two.

Rata ward had 18 ECE services; 5 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 31: **Rata service types**

Service type	N=18	Sample
Kindergarten	4	1
Kōhanga reo	1	1
Playcentre	1	1
Education and care	8	1
Pasifika	1	1
Home-based	2	
Casual	1	

No services have closed in the last two years. Five of the 18 services were privately owned. Twelve provided full day ECE, and 6, sessional ECE. (Information for two was not available). Forty one percent were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 41 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 18 percent, between 50–52 weeks.

Participation and provision

All services had stable rolls and were working to capacity, except the kōhanga reo which had chosen to operate below capacity to provide a small roll size, good adult:child ratios and opportunity for new staff to learn how to run the kōhanga reo. A local decline in Māori families was expected to have an impact on roll stability in the kōhanga reo. Uncertainty about the continuance of a building lease beyond 2006 made it hard for the kōhanga reo to make long-term plans.

A common pattern in Rata was for playcentre to be used for children under three, and for those over three years old to attend more than one service to suit parental employment or training.

A key participation issue, affecting age of entry to ECE, was waiting time for over 2-year-olds for education and care (nine months) and kindergarten (14 months). Kōhanga reo and the Pasifika centre also had waiting lists for over twos.

Playcentre had a waiting list for under twos, but this had been reduced after an extra morning session was added. Playcentres in this locality were finding it hard to attract people to do playcentre training, and this in turn affected ability to have sufficient people to offer the sessions that were sought. Ongoing recruitment of parents into training courses was needed because of the turnover of families. Parents whose children used the Pasifika centre tended to keep their under two children at home since the centre had put the fees up.

Information from parents responding showed in comparison with other localities:

- Rata was one of four localities where children were more likely to attend more than one ECE service and where dual attendance increased with age.
- Parents who wanted different times were more likely to want their child to attend all day and during school hours.
- Parents were less likely to rate their child learning their own language and culture as a very important reason for using the ECE service.
- Parents were less likely to regard a good ERO report as very important characteristic.
- Parents (13 percent) were more likely to rate their overall satisfaction with the service as only satisfactory, rather than good or very good.
- Parents were less likely to think their needs for high adult:child ratios, a good quality education programme, and children being happy and settled were very well met.
- Parents were least likely to have difficulty affording the cost of their child's ECE service.
- Parents were more likely to spend time helping or working in their child's ECE service.

The finding that some parents responding wanted longer hours than the sample services were offering accords with the views of education and care centre respondents at the community meeting for this study who said that more all day provision is sought by parents. Use of more than one service was sometimes to suit parents' employment or training hours.

Actions and plans to address issues associated with responsiveness of services to cater for families' needs were:

- The playcentre association was trying to make training more attractive and encourage families to stay by paying some people to do some jobs and providing office space for them. There was concern that the 20 hours free ECE for 3- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led services from 2007 would make it even harder for playcentre to survive since parents would want their child to attend the free ECE service.
- The kindergarten association had done market research in this locality and was considering a possibility of changed provision from sessional to all day. The association noted that if all children were to stay for the whole day and the whole week, such changed provision would reduce the number of children attending from 90 in two sessions to 39 all day. This would have flow-on effects to the waiting list.
- The kōhanga reo had no specific plans, but whānau management was concerned that if kōhanga reo opted to become a "teacher-led" service, whānau participation would be lost and the strength of the kōhanga reo kaupapa would be diluted. This in turn would affect participation.
- The Pasifika centre planned to apply for a discretionary grant to extend its building and cater for more over twos.

In respect to the strategic plan, there could be fewer places available in this locality if the kindergarten extends its hours. In addition, if playcentre is not able to address parent needs, attract parents for training and retain its provision especially for under twos, there could be insufficient provision in this locality, and parental opportunities for learning and support through participation in playcentre would be lessened.

The regional MOE official noted Rata's good ECE participation figures, and thought that most services except kōhanga reo are managing their waiting lists well, and Rata is not a projected growth area. However there is an element of unpredictability about the future since the population is mobile. The MOE has employed a researcher to track occupancy ratings and scope out future needs for community-owned services in the region. The report will be publicly available for providers to use after 30 June 2005. In addition, strengthening and supporting

diverse services to meet a variety of parent and child needs and to work in a non-competitive way was thought to be a main challenge for the future. This requires collaboration between services.

Quality

Teaching and learning processes

Rata's average ratings on the sub-indicators of process quality was 3.52, at the middle-high end of the range for the eight localities. The highest average rating in Rata was for learning environments where children have opportunity to concentrate and complete work, and display purposeful involvement in learning episodes. No services had low ratings on this sub-indicator.

There was variability between services and the lowest average rating on the sub-indicator *Children's interactions with each other, including tuakana teina relationships and children co-constructing learning*. The *Education programme* sub-indicator denoting aspects of the education programme, interactions and environment focused on early literacy, mathematics, problem solving and creativity was not rated very high in any service. One service was lower than others on most indicators.

Teacher/educators in all services were using Te Whāriki as their curriculum, made reference to the principles and/or strands and demonstrated how they used it within their own programme. However, teacher/educators in three of five services predicted issues about implementation should Te Whāriki become legislated:

- Pasifika centre teachers wanted more professional support, time and resources, including translation of Te Whāriki into Samoan so it was accessible to the whole community.
- Kōhanga reo had some concerns about knowing how to use Te Whāriki to plan, non-attendance at wananga where Te Whāriki is discussed, and feared that an inflexible system may be imposed on kōhanga reo that does not respect whānau, hapu, and iwi differences.
- Playcentre wanted Te Whāriki to be translated into Mandarin and Japanese for parents from these countries.

This locality had high ratings on indicators that assessment is collaborative, based on data collection and linked to Te Whāriki, but somewhat lower ratings that:

- planning and evaluation related to the education programme and children is being undertaken; and
- self review in respect to teaching, learning and development, adult communication and organisational management is being undertaken.

Underlying issues related to these aspects were the need for greater professional support for untrained staff to boost understanding (Pasifika), uncertainty about external expectations (education and care), and pressure to formally record for different people and about a variety of matters (playcentre). All services except kōhanga reo said there was insufficient time for planning, assessment, evaluation and self-review. Teacher/educators want to find approaches to assessment, planning, evaluation and self-review that are meaningful to them, manageable, and that they feel confident will meet their own purposes and external requirements.

Structural quality

Ratios

All services were able to meet ratios but the Pasifika centre struggled sometimes. The Pasifika and ECE centres anticipated the need to pay for more staff in the future.

Qualifications – teacher-led services

The kindergarten and education and care centre had sufficient registered and qualified teachers to meet the requirements of the strategic plan although qualified relievers may be hard to find in the future, since the teaching workforce is ageing. Teachers in the Pasifika centre were qualified, but they were unsure about the processes of teacher registration.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led services

The playcentre and kōhanga reo provided opportunities for training but continually faced the need for more people to train. Issues in respect to training are:

- Recognition of Whakapakari as a teaching qualification could provide equality with ECE qualifications, but whānau are divided about whether this is an appropriate course to pursue (Kōhanga reo).
- The training grant allocated by the NZ Playcentre Federation for this region is insufficient to cover costs, and the association has to pay more so it can attract and retain training facilitators.

Professional development

Teacher/educators in all services had participated in a range of professional development opportunities or whole service professional development over the previous 12 months, and except for the education and care centre had access to ongoing support through an external support structure. The main professional support issue was for Pacific language resources. Pacific teachers highlighted their desire for time and staffing to translate their resources into their own Pacific language.

A number of Ministry of Education regional managers talked about the importance of professional development linked to strategic plan goals.

Collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education

Relationships with parents in the interests of children

The relationship with parents was rated as moderately strong overall. Parents in four of five centres were involved in formal assessment for their own child through contributing information for assessment and planning, although there was no indication that they were also active in planning for learning, except in playcentre. A higher percentage of playcentre parents in this locality compared with other localities wanted more time to talk to the supervisor.

Relationships with schools to support transition

Relationships with schools to support transition were moderately strong and developing. Playcentre had no contact, but was catering for younger children, with children tending to move on to kindergarten before going to school. All other services took children to visit some or many schools or kura (kōhanga reo) in the locality. The kindergarten association held a professional development course on Te Whāriki for new entrant teachers and had reciprocal visiting with one school.

Relationships between ECE services for mutual support

A variety of professional support networks in this locality were being used for professional support as well as service specific support structures for kindergarten, playcentre and kōhanga reo. Kindergarten and community-owned education and care centres were meeting together through MOE professional development contracts and cross-sector committees in the city. Pasifika service teachers were supported by Pacific organisations.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and GSE

Services in this locality reported very productive relationships with health services with health visitors checking children's health. Only the Pasifika service would like more visits. One service reported on very good relationships with GSE, with GSE referring some children to it. Some needs for greater support from GSE were identified at the community meeting:

advice and support about speech and language;

support for children with low and moderate special needs; and

support to be available at the time it is needed.

Relationships with Māori communities and iwi

Only the kōhanga reo had a strong relationship with Māori and local iwi, as well as Māori outside the area. The kindergarten and education and care centre had a relationship with the principal of the kura, but participants from these services would like to have stronger relationships. The local iwi was about to release its education strategy which was said to be critical of educational institutions in respect to Māori education.

Relationships with Pacific communities

Relationships with Pacific communities varied. Pasifika services had close connections through professional associations and their own networks. Kindergarten had worked with a Pasifika puna on a professional development contract, and kōhanga reo had social relationships with a school Samoan unit and a working relationship with Pacific groups through community centre involvement. Playcentre and the education and care centre had no relationships.

Rimu

Rimu is a small town in a rural area. It is predominantly European/Pākehā, with the highest individual median income of the eight study localities. It has a low unemployment rate. It had the highest new entrant experience of ECE: 99 percent. However, its regularity of attendance was just above the average for the eight localities. It had a high proportion on its waiting list, almost all 3- year-olds.

Rimu ward had 8 ECE services; 5 are in the study. The service types are given in the table below.

Table 32: **Rimu service types**

Service type	N=8	Sample
Kindergarten	2	1
Kōhanga reo	2	1
Playcentre	1	1
Education and care	2	1
Home-based	1	1

No services have closed in the last two years, except for a kōhanga reo. Two of the eight services were privately owned. Five provided full day ECE, and 2, sessional ECE. (Information for one was not available).

Forty percent of the five services we have information on were open between 40 to 45 weeks, 20 percent between 46 to 49 weeks, and 40 percent, between 50–52 weeks in the 2003–04 year.

Participation and provision

Reflecting the under-five population decline, Rimu and another rural locality had the highest proportion of services with spare places of all localities, and the lowest proportion of current and new children waiting for a place. But the sample kindergarten did not fit this pattern. It had a large waiting list (wait time 11 months), although some spaces at certain times were not being used. Kindergarten was positioned as the step before school, with children moving to it from the home-based service and the education and care centre. Three of the four other services not operating to capacity were expected to have full and stable rolls in the future: playcentre because of initiatives to target parents with younger children and have greater association support for education, the kōhanga reo was attracting more children since another kōhanga reo had closed, and the home-based service regarded its roll situation as temporary since a group of children had just moved to school. The education and care centre had difficulty in attracting qualified teachers and so remaining sustainable, and children did not continue to attend once a kindergarten sessional place became available. Parents with children attending this centre were less likely to rate it as very good than parents with children attending the other Rimu services.

Parental employment was a reason why parents took their children out of kindergarten, kōhanga reo and playcentre. Full time work was less likely for kindergarten and playcentre parents responding.

Information from parents responding in Rimu showed in comparison with other localities:

- Rata was one of four localities where children were more likely to attend more than one ECE service and where dual attendance increased with age.
- Parents were least likely to have difficulty affording the cost of their ECE service.
- Parents were less likely to rate *Parent can learn about child development*, *Parent can help at the ECE service*, *Parent can meet others* and *Parent can do other things* as very important reasons for their child's attendance. They were also less likely to rate *Child can learn their own language and culture* as very important reasons.

In respect to the strategic plan goal of increasing participation in ECE, the MOE is undertaking a network analysis of Rimu to map what currently exists, gaps in provision, and strengthening provision to meet needs. The MOE would like to support a more multi-functional use of some facilities.

Quality

Teaching and learning processes

Overall, the ratings of process quality were around the low- medium mark, with some services having high ratings. There was wide variation and some low ratings on all sub-indicators, except *Learning environments where children are allowed to concentrate and complete work,* which had a moderately high overall rating.

Services were using Te Whāriki, except the playcentre which was just being licensed and had appointed an educator to provide training and help with incorporating Te Whāriki in planning.

Three services predicted specific problems in implementing Te Whāriki if it was legislated: the limited understanding of untrained education and care teachers, which may be addressed through the strategic plan qualification requirements, but there was uncertainty about whether needs for professional development would also be met; whānau training and ongoing turnover in kōhanga reo; and the need for new entrant teachers to have better understanding of Te Whāriki (kindergarten).

All services described assessment practices, except the playcentre, which was about to develop these. Parents were involved in planning and assessment in only some services. Each service had specific issues about assessment and these indicated that greater professional support and time for assessment are needed. The four licensed services other than kindergarten had very little time per week for planning, assessment and self review. Three services undertook self-review, but one of these was unsure about what to review and wanted more support. Service specific needs for professional support and time may not be addressed through the strategic plan.

Structural quality

Ratios
All services were meeting the current ratio requirements easily, and predicted no problems if ratios changed.

Qualifications – teacher-led services
While there were enough qualified teachers to meet current requirements, both the education and care centre and home-based service had had or were having difficulties in finding a registration supervisor so teachers could undertake the registration advice and guidance programme. The MOE representative thought registration could become more of a challenge in future as the demand grows for future supervisors.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led
Playcentre and kōhanga reo had a continual turnover of educator/kaiako, contributing to a need for ongoing training. It was hoped the playcentre's appointment of an adult educator would give impetus to parental take-up of training.

Professional and leadership support
Professional and leadership support varied markedly in this locality. No formal professional development had been undertaken in the education and care centre or home-based service in the previous 12 months, and the education and care centre did not have external professional support structures. Services were available to this locality through a college of education and a private provider. Access to professional support for these staff was up to management.

Collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education

Relationships with parents in the interests of children

This locality had a moderate rating on the indicator of strength of relationships with parents. Teacher/educators provided opportunities for parents to be involved in planning and assessment, but parents in the education and care centre were less likely to be asked to do this. Parents were providing volunteer help in playcentre, kōhanga reo and kindergarten. The main thing parents talked to the teacher/educator about was the child's progress, interests and abilities, followed by their child's behaviour. Of those who wanted more information about these, most were from education and care.

Relationship with schools to support transition

Kindergarten appeared to be the only service which had some reciprocal relationships with schools involving two-way visits.

Relationships with ECE services for mutual support

ECE services tended to link with their own service type, except for kindergarten which had linkages with an education and care centre and home-based service.

Integrated services

Relationships with health and GSE

There is a strong health and social service base in this locality and all ECE services had productive relationships, with health agencies visiting centre-based services to check children's health. Some issues were raised about GSE:

- GSE bypassing the home-based co-ordinator to go directly to the caregiver about referrals or IEPs;
- Difficulty in getting speech therapy for some kindergarten children.

Relationships with Māori and iwi

Only the kōhanga reo had strong relationships with the iwi runanga, although the home-based service had a limited relationship in respect to referrals to and from iwi. Other services were inhibited by lack of confidence and having no Māori families, or difficulty in convincing parents to visit the marae.

Relationships with Pacific communities

Only the kindergarten had contact with one or two families. Other services reported no Pacific community in the locality.

5 Indicator analysis

In this section we summarise where the eight localities and 46 services were in relation to the strategic plan goals, using indicators around the strategies and intermediate outcomes, and provision of ECE services.

This section focuses on the 16 indicators, some of which have sub-indicators. A further indicator of level of participation in the whole locality was obtained from MOE data. Indicators for services meeting teacher/educator qualification requirements are separate for teacher-led and parent and whānau-led services, reflecting the different targets in the strategic plan for these services. Parent and whānau-led services are kōhanga reo, playgroups, puna, and playcentre.

The indicators serve to tell us how well a particular ECE service is achieving a strategic plan goal or target. For example, indicators from our data of the intermediate outcome *Cohesion of education 0–8 years*, were based on indicators of relationships with schools to support children's transition, relationship with parents in the interests of children, and relationships with ECE services to provide mutual support. The indicator of the relationship with schools was drawn from what teacher/educators said about whether the ECE service visits the school, whether the school visits the ECE service, whether information from the ECE service about the child is discussed when the child goes to school, and whether teachers share professional development or discuss professional issues. We used observations of centre quality in terms of adult:child interaction and education programme focus that have been found to be related to benefits for children's learning as indicators of quality teaching and learning practices.

In this analysis, we provide an overall picture of the performance of services on the different indicators of the three strategic plan goals of participation, quality, and collaboration, and provision of ECE services, then explore these indicators through cross-tabulation with the following factors:

- Locality
- Rural/urban
- Low socio-economic/not (using average median income)
- Population decline/ staying the same/ increase
- Service type
- Service is sessional/full-day
- Proportion of Māori children attending the service
- Proportion of Pacific children attending the service
- EQI index of the service
- Proportion of the roll aged under 2
- Proportion of the roll aged 3 or 4

We report on these cross-tabulations **only where they show differences related to particular factors**. We have then correlated each of the indicators to see overall patterns within each and across outcomes.

The next table describes the indicators.

Table 33: **Indicators of intended outcomes**

Intended outcome: Improved provision	Indicators
Provision of services meets demand	Management responses to whether service had spare places, waiting lists for children wanting different times/more hours, waiting list for children eligible to attend.
Provision of services meets needs of families	Parents responding Yes to " Whether times child attends suits parent "(Parent questionnaire, q 12) Yes to "Whether choice of service meets parent needs" (Parent questionnaire, q 15) Yes to whether their service met their needs very well (Parent questionnaire, q 7)
Standard of property is high	Mean weighted rating of standard of buildings (weighting 0.7), office space (0.7), outdoor space (0.7), indoor space (o.7), space for adults to meet (0.3), space for meeting with specialists (0.3), space for resource preparation (0.3), space for resource storage (0.3) (Service profile q 10 a, e, f, g, h, I, j. k)
Intended outcome: Increased participation*	
Children have regular **attendance**	Rating of whether irregular attendance was an issue for many children, some children, not an issue (Management interview, q 6)
Intended outcome: Improved quality	
Teacher-led services are meeting 2004 **qualification** requirements and likely to meet 2007 requirements	Services have enough qualified registered teachers to meet **current** qualification requirements (Management interview, q 1) Having sufficient **qualified** teachers in the next two years will not be problematic Having sufficient **registered** teachers in the next two years will not be problematic (Management interview, q 1)
Parent and whānau-led services are meeting regulated **qualification** requirements	Services have enough educators/kaiako to meet **current** qualification requirements at all times (Management interview, q 1) Having sufficient educators/kaiako **in the next two years** will not be problematic (Management interview, q 2)
Services are meeting 2004 **ratio** requirements	Rating of service finds it easy to meet regulations for ratios (Management interview, q 5)
Teacher/educator development	Rating of depth of participation in professional development, and access to ongoing professional support (Management interview, q 4, service profile q 8, teacher interview q 1).
Te Whāriki is used as the curriculum	Rating of whether teachers use Te Whāriki as the curriculum, describe some concepts, and explain its use (Teacher interview, q 1) Rating of whether difficulties if Te Whāriki legislated with respect to professional development or training, understanding of Te Whāriki, time for implementation, resources to support implementation. Teacher interview, q 1) Rating of whether assessment is based on data collection, processes linked to Te Whāriki, parents involved, children involved

Assessment is collaborative, based on data collection, linked to Te Whāriki.	(Teacher interview, q 1, 2, 3)
Planning and evaluation takes place	Planning and evaluation related to the education programme, children
Self review takes place	Self review on teaching, learning and development (weighted 2), adult communication and collaboration, organisational management (Teacher interview, q 1, 2, 3)
Levels of process quality are high	Overall mean of quality rating scale items in each of the sub-indicators: adults responsive and extend children; children complete work and show concentration; children support, co-operate and co-construct learning; education programme; culture and inclusion, Overall rating – all sub-indicators combined
Leadership is well supported	Rating of support for leadership through professional development, management advice and support, financial advice and support, language and culture advice and support, and employment advice and support. (Management interview, q 5) Few or no major issues with respect to leadership (Management interview, q 5)
Intended outcome: stronger[16] collaborative relationships	
More integrated services to children, parents, families and whānau – health services and GSE	Rating of whether relationship is viewed as a productive relationship in the interests of children, services are available when needed, services are of consistent good quality (Management and teacher interviews, q 7 d, e, f, g)
Cohesion of education 0–8 years Relationship with parents supports children's learning	Rating of whether parents contribute to assessment and planning, parents follow up activities at home, parents think teacher/educators provide them with enough information about their child (Teacher and management interviews, q 7 a)
Relationships with schools support children's transition	Rating of whether the ECE service visits schools takes part in activities, the school visits the ECE service/takes part in activities, information about children is discussed when children go to school, teachers share professional development/discuss professional issues (Teacher and management interviews, q 7 b)
Relationships with ECE services provides mutual support	Rating of whether services meet together with own type for mutual support in clusters, purapura, services meet with others for professional development/training, services meet with others for sharing information and support. (Teacher and management interviews, q 7 b)

* Children have high level of **participation** in ECE at ward level is described in the overall description of the wards.

We also considered factors that have a bearing on the strategic plan goal of enhancing quality.

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[16] The strategic plan goal is to "promote collaborative relationships". We have used the term "stronger collaborative relationships" as the intended outcome.

Contributing factors	
Adult team work	Field researcher ratings of adult:adult interactions, adults work as a team
There is **adequate time** available for teachers/educators for planning, assessment, evaluation and self-review	Rating of amount of non-contact time, teacher views of adequacy of non-contact time (Teacher interview q 4)

Provision

The tables below describe the extent to which provision of services meets demand, the extent to which provision of services meets family needs, and the standard of ECE properties.

Overall, around half the study services had no spare capacity and rather more had waiting lists for new children eligible to start.

Table 34: **Provision of services meeting demand**

N=45	Services with no spare places	Waiting lists for current children for different hours	Waiting lists for new children
	%	%	%
Average rating	49	38	64

None of the Pasifika centres or kindergartens had spare places, compared with 75 percent of education and care, 71 percent of playcentre, and 62 percent of kōhanga reo. Education and care centre spare places tended to be for specific days or times, while kōhanga reo and playcentre tended to have spare child places for the total time the service was open. Playcentre participants consistently described difficulties in recruiting and retaining new families because of the high level of volunteer work required. They had a struggle to maintain training levels because of the turnover of parents and the necessity to continually train new parents. These factors contributed to declining playcentre roll numbers and issues about playcentre sustainability.

Kōhanga reo tended to have two prime reasons for not operating to capacity. One was declining Māori population in the locality, or, a temporary situation, a group of children leaving to go to school or kura. The second was difficulty in recruiting and retaining sufficient qualified kaiako to enable the kōhanga to operate to capacity. These difficulties were associated with qualified and fluent kaiako being sought after and paid well by other employers, and difficulties in attracting whānau to undertake higher levels of training. Sometimes kōhanga whānau had decided not to operate to capacity because they did not have the staffing numbers to sustain larger roll size.

The following findings are probably associated with the type differences for Pasifika and kōhanga reo services described above. The finding that there were fewer spare places in services with more 3–4-year-olds may reflect the fact that kindergartens had no spare capacity.

- Fewer services (29 percent) with a high proportion of Pacific children had spare places than those with a low proportion (45 percent).
- More services (58 percent) with a high proportion of Māori children had spare places than those with a low proportion (41 percent).

- Fewer services (44 percent) with over 50 percent of children aged 3 and 4 years had spare places compared with those with a lower percentage (64 percent).

Waiting lists were also associated with service type:

More part day services (42 percent) had waiting lists for different hours or times than full day (29 percent).

Factor patterns associated with locality were:

- More services in minor urban areas (57 percent) tended to have spare places compared with services in main urban areas (44 percent).
- Surprisingly, services in areas of population increase had only slightly fewer spare places than those in areas of population decline (50 percent compared with 56 percent), when we would have expected them to be full to cater for demand. Those that were in areas that had stable population had relatively fewer spare places (40 percent), perhaps because they were better able to predict enrolments.
- A higher percentage (80 percent) of services in three localities had spare places: Rimu (small town and rural, population decline), Nikau (city suburb, population increase), and Karaka (small town and rural, population decline).

The study services met the needs well of just over half the parents with respect to the times the child attends, the choice of service, and parents' satisfaction with the service.

Table 35: **Provision of services meets family needs**

	Percentage (n=45)
Does not meet needs	3
Meets 1 need	11
Meets 2 needs	31
Meets all 3 needs	55

A higher percentage of parents using home-based services were satisfied with all three aspects that were rated for this indicator. A strength of home-based provision is times offered are usually flexible to suit parental needs. This may account for their higher ratings. Playcentre and Pasifika centre parents tended to have lower ratings. The small numbers in puna and playgroup make interpretation difficult.

Table 36: **Parental satisfaction and service type**

	Does not meet needs %	Meets 1 need %	Meets 2 needs %	Meets all 3 needs %
Kindergarten (n=360)	3	12	27	58
Education and care (n=208)	2	10	35	53
Pasifika (n=52)	4	25	35	37
Kōhanga reo (n=142)	3	6	28	63
Playcentre (n=79)	1	6	52	41
Home-based (n=33)	3	3	18	76
Puna (n=6)	0	17	50	33
Playgroup (n=6)	17	17	0	66

All three aspects met more parents' needs in areas of population decline (63 percent), than population staying the same (55 percent) and population decrease (50 percent).

Fewer parents (45 percent) in services with a high proportion of Pasifika children said the service met all three needs, compared with 58 percent of parents in services with a lower proportion.

The quality of space for most services was only fair or moderately good. Strategic plan actions with respect to space were under review as part of the regulatory review, but did not include review of space for adults, office space, building quality, or space for resource preparation. Change in any of these aspects is unlikely to be linked to strategic plan actions, but changes to indoor and outdoor space could be.

Table 37: **Quality of space**

	Percentage (n=45)
Poor	11
Fair	22
Moderately good	41
Very good	24

Quality of space was rated lowest in Pasifika services and puna (average rating of fair to moderately good and fair respectively), and lowest in Pohutakawa (where three Pasifika centres were located).

Participation

Thirteen percent of the study services had children with irregular attendance.

Table 38:   **Regularity of attendance (n=45)**

Most children have regular attendance %	Some children attend irregularly %	Many children attend irregularly %
65	20	13

Most children in Pasifika, home-based and kōhanga reo attended regularly. This is perhaps a reflection of parental language and cultural aspirations in Pasifika and kōhanga reo, and of home-based services being geared around parental needs with respect to times.

Karaka, followed by Kauri, had a higher level of irregular attendance (80 percent and 50 percent respectively) than other localities. Irregular attendance was associated with the rurality of these localities. Forty-eight percent of services in minor urban localities reported irregular attendance for some or many children, compared with only 20 percent in main urban localities. Common reasons for irregular attendance were cost and access to transport since there were often long distances to travel, and seasonal rural employment. Lack of transport and its cost was also found to be the key isolation-related issue in the Equity Funding evaluation.

There was a trend for services in lower income wards (under $17,000) to have more irregular attendance, 38 percent compared with 27 percent of services in higher income wards. When we examined specific services the difference was stronger. Those services with an EQI[17] of 1 and 2 had more children with irregular attendance (50 percent and 60 percent respectively) than services with EQI 3 (29 percent) or 4 (20 percent) or those with no EQI that did not meet the low income criteria (22 percent). This accords with views that cost is a barrier to participation. With respect to the strategic plan, making ECE more affordable, continuing to support services that are isolated and in low socio-economic localities through provision of Equity Funding, and providing the top-up to small rural services could take some financial and workload pressures off rural and low income families, although these measures are unlikely to address individual needs for transport.

There was also a tendency for services in localities with high Māori populations to have more irregular attendance than other services.

Quality

We used ratings of process quality derived from observation of adult interactions with children, children's interactions with each other, and the education programme as indicators of the outcome *Children develop knowledge, understanding, skills, and learning dispositions, in line with Te Whāriki*. These were grouped into five sub-indicators that indicate different aspects of the learning environment associated in research evidence with outcomes for children, or culturally valued interactions and environments in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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[17]   The private education and care centres centres for which there was no EQI index are not included.

Average ratings were mostly medium. The two lowest ratings were children's interactions with each other and aspects of the education programme. The greatest variability was with items indicating environments where children have opportunity to concentrate and complete work, aspects of the education programme, and children's interactions with each other.

Table 39: **Sub-indicators* for children develop knowledge, understanding, skills and learning dispositions, in line with Te Whāriki**

Sub-indicator	Average	Minimum	Maximum
Learning environments where adults respond to and extend children's thinking	3.6	2.1	4.7
Learning environments where children have opportunity to concentrate and complete work, and display purposeful involvement in learning episodes	3.7	1.3	4.8
Children's interactions associated with whanaungatanga, tuakana teina relationships, children supporting and co-operating with each other, co-construction of learning, children's leadership and modelling	3	1.2	4.5
Aspects of education programme, interactions and environment focused on early literacy, mathematics, problem solving and creativity	3	1.7	4.8
Interactions and environment where tikanga Māori is evident, children's culture is valued and all children are included	3.5	2.1	5
Overall – all sub-indicators combined	3.4	2	4.7

* Ratings are: 5 (very much like), 4 (much like), 3 (somewhat like), 2 (very little like), 1 (not at all like).

Playgroup, puna and home-based services had the lowest combined ratings. The most variability in overall ratings was in education and care, playcentre and kindergarten.

Kauri (small town and rural), had the lowest average overall rating of all sub-indicators combined (2.9), and Nikau (city suburb) had the highest overall rating (3.8). Of all localities, Kauri had the lowest rating and widest variability between services of teacher/educators using Te Whāriki as their curriculum, having some understanding of concepts and demonstrating its use. Nikau had the highest rating, and no variability. These "outliers" were analysed to see whether contributing factors related to professional development, qualification levels, support for leadership, and non-contact time could help explain these differences. The analysis shows that Nikau had higher levels on all these aspects, especially with respect to professional development, qualification levels and non-contact time.

Table 40: **Possible factors contributing to quality ratings in "outlier" localities**

Factors	Kauri (lowest average overall rating)	Nikau (highest average overall rating)
Professional development	Poor professional support for most services, and variability in access to support	All services had strong professional support
Qualification levels – teacher-led services	50 percent predicted enough qualified and registered teachers now and in two years	67 percent predicted enough qualified and registered teachers now and in two years
Qualification levels – parent-led services	25 percent predicted enough qualified teachers/kaiako currently and in 2 years	100 percent predicted enough qualified teacher/kaiako now and in 2 years
Support for leadership	Variable support for leadership in respect to professional, financial, management, language and culture and employment advice and support	Variable, but slightly higher levels of advice and support
Amount of non-contact time	Low average rating on adequacy of non-contact time, and variability. (Lowest of all localities)	High average rating on adequacy of non-contact time, and variability. (Highest of all localities)

Qualifications – teacher–led services

Teacher-led services had enough qualified teachers to meet current requirements, but there were difficulties in finding relievers for all services in three minor urban localities (Kauri, Karaka, and Totara) where there was not a good pool of qualified relievers, and for an education and care centre in Nikau. Not having suitable qualified relievers available could indirectly impact on the strategic goal of improving quality through preventing staff from activities that require time away from the centre such as participating in professional development and training, or meeting with specialists about specific children. Sharing a relievers' pool between service types, and having a mobile reserve of relievers were ideas for resolving the issue.

Some problems were predicted in respect to

- having sufficient qualified teachers to meet future targets (58 percent of 26 teacher-led services predicted problems); and
- supporting qualified teachers to become registered (50 percent of 26 teacher-led services predicted future problems).

More centres with a higher proportion of under twos predicted difficulties in meeting future requirements for qualified teachers, and future registered teachers compared with those with lower proportions. This is probably because of the higher numbers of staff needed for this age group and because kindergartens (which had no problems) were not in this group.

Table 41: **Percentage of under-twos and difficulties in meeting teacher qualification requirements**

	Meeting future qualified teacher requirements	Meeting future teacher registration requirements
	%	%
<20 % under 2 (n=16)	25	25
> 20% under 2 (n=10)	70	90

Kindergarten associations and home-based networks had no difficulties in meeting targets for qualified teachers, compared with education and care centres where 66 percent predicted difficulties, and Pasifika centres where 75 percent predicted difficulties. Kindergartens had a history of employing qualified and registered teachers, and an ability through their structures to pool relievers, provide short term assistance, and attract teachers through offering pay parity. The two education and care centres and early intervention centre not predicting difficulties in reaching targets had a history of employing qualified or specialist teachers. Two of these also had umbrella structures providing professional support.

There seemed to be two distinct groups having difficulties in meeting qualification targets:

- Education and care centres that were not providing tangible support for teachers to train, and where staff were undertaking training in their own time and at their own expense. Managers in these centres often reported resistance of older staff to training. There was often no pool of suitable qualified teachers to recruit from, or competition for qualified teachers. The criteria for Incentive Grants to help support staff to study has been expanded, but will not apply to all these teachers. ERO (2003) reported that centres that found it easier to meet requirements were those that relied on opportunities for staff training and development rather than on recruiting new staff with qualifications.

- Pasifika centres and a centre for migrant and refugee families that had issues related to recruiting and supporting people with language fluency and cultural understanding to train in ECE. Pasifika centres had a range of issues that made it hard for them, including access to appropriate mentoring and training providers, and language resources. Some participants thought a resource centre to offer professional and resource support would be helpful in areas of high Pacific or migrant population. Establishing resource centres is not a specific strategic plan action.

There were different pressures with respect to getting teachers registered. It seemed that those who were trying to attract qualified teachers were less concerned about registration than those that had qualified teachers wanting to become registered. Issues about advice and guidance predominated, the main being not having access to a registration supervisor to provide the programme. Again, kindergarten teachers did not usually have difficulty in respect to teacher registration because of the professional support available through the association and other teachers, and a history of knowing what to do. Access to a registration supervisor to offer advice and guidance was a prime issue for others. In Pasifika centres, an added difficulty was finding an appropriate Pacific registration supervisor.

Qualifications – parent and whānau-led services

Three kōhanga reo and two playcentres did not have enough qualified educators/kaiako currently to always meet licensing requirements or to operate on the number of days they wanted. All eight kōhanga reo and seven of eight playcentres predicted that recruiting and retaining educators/kaiako would be a problem over the next two years.

In each there was a turnover of educators/kaiako and parents/whānau as children moved on to kura or school, or in the case of playcentre, to another ECE service. It was hard to encourage parents/whānau to undertake advanced level training. Some participants thought that recognition of the service-specific qualifications within the wider ECE sector, e.g. playcentre training contributing to a Diploma of Teaching (ECE) could help motivate parents to undertake advanced level training. This would enable the qualifications to provide a career path. Kōhanga reo participants were divided and wary about recognition of Whakapakari with a concern to retain the integrity of the kōhanga reo kaupapa. Low pay rates for supervisor, kaiako and kaimahi were a factor contributing to reluctance to remain as educators/kaiako in these services.

Service-specific issues were:

- High levels of parental volunteer work in running playcentre and in providing the education programme, and the cost and time commitment in attending training courses;
- High levels of volunteer work in running kōhanga reo, kōhanga whānau who are in paid employment being unable to undertake training, insufficient funding and absence of relievers to enable release time for whānau/kaiako to undertake training, and the cost of training courses.

Kōhanga whānau in one locality thought that expectations for kōhanga whānau to provide an adequate training environment were unrealistic.

Most thought these issues could be partly resolved through greater funding support from the government. Most were not doing anything to address the issues themselves, except lobbying.

The one licence-exempt Pasifika centre did have qualified teachers although this was not a requirement. The playgroup and puna did not.

The playcentres and kōhanga reo having most difficulty were located in four localities: Kauri (small town and rural), Karaka (small town and rural), Pohutakawa (city) and Kowhai (city). A higher percentage of parent and whānau-led services in the following localities had difficulty in meeting both current and future requirements:

- Minor urban areas (45 percent) compared with main urban areas (22 percent);
- Localities with average incomes below $17,000 (57 percent) compared with above $17,000 (37 percent);
- Localities with population decrease (63 percent) compared with population increase (29 percent), and population staying the same (0 percent).

The strategic plan aims to "develop policies to maintain and enhance quality" in parent and whānau-led services.

Ratios

All services had enough teacher/educators to meet ratio requirements currently, except for a kōhanga reo that could not always remain open because of insufficient relief staffing. Predicted difficulties were associated with the difficulty of getting qualified staff in teacher-led services, and with recruitment and retention of educators/kaiako in parent and whānau-led services to undertake higher levels of training described above.

Te Whāriki

All services except the puna, playgroup and a kōhanga reo were using Te Whāriki. Teacher/educators in fifty-four percent of services were also able to describe some concepts and how they used it. A higher proportion of these were services with less than 20 percent under twos (71 percent).

Kindergartens were rated highest on working with Te Whāriki, assessment, planning and evaluation and self review. They also had the most non-contact time and strongest professional support.

Teacher/educators in only three services thought there would be no issues if Te Whāriki was legislated. Largely, participants thought needs were for appropriate qualified staff and ongoing professional development to support teacher/educators working with Te Whāriki. Some thought Te Whāriki was complex and hard to understand, and having qualified staff and ongoing professional support was vital. Other conditions services wanted to support working with Te Whāriki were resources, with Pacific centres wanting Te Whāriki to be translated into their Pacific language and accompanied by Pacific resources, and adequate non-contact time. Some support for specific aspects such as biculturalism, special needs and extending children's play was thought to be important.

Similar issues concerning the need for training, professional development and adequate non-contact time were raised with respect to planning, assessment, evaluation and self review. Services had a range of approaches to these practices. Self review was the most variable. Only 26 percent of services were reviewing all three elements of the DOPs.

With respect to the strategic plan, the qualification requirements, exemplar project and self review guidelines may address some of these issues. Access for all teacher/educators to ongoing professional development linked to Te Whāriki, and enabling conditions of service that work together around children's learning are also levers to making the above processes meaningful and raising quality levels.

Strong professional support and support for leadership

There were service type differences in strength of professional support which reflected differences in access to support through an umbrella structure. Compared with the other services in this study, kindergarten, kōhanga reo and playcentre had greater professional support and higher levels of participation in a range of professional development opportunities or whole service professional development over a number of weeks. Puna participants reported there was no professional support for them and none had participated in professional development in the last 12 months. Playgroup and home-based participants had limited professional development opportunities.

Services in main urban areas had stronger levels of professional support than those in minor urban areas reflecting the greater abundance of training and professional development providers and support networks in these localities.

Puna, playgroup and home-based services had the least support for leadership.

Table 42:   **Adequacy of support for leadership**

	Average support for leadership
Puna (n=1)	2.0
Kōhanga reo (n=8)	3.4
Education and care (n=12)	3.4
Home-based (n=3)	2.3
Kindergarten (n=8)	4.1
Pasifika (n=5)	4.2
Playcentre (n=8)	2.7
Playgroup (n=1)	2

* Each of the following supports for leadership was rated as 1: professional, management, financial, language and culture, employment. Maximum 5, minimum 0.

Paid non-contact time

Kindergartens had the highest amount of paid non-contact time. Playgroups, puna and home-based services had none, and kōhanga reo and playcentre had low amounts. Having little or no paid non-contact time contributed to volunteer workload demands in playcentre. Kōhanga reo kaiako mostly reported that they did their planning in the school holidays, following the TKRNT term planning chart provided in TKRNT's *Te Whāriki o ngā Kōhanga reo*.

Table 43:   **Paid non-contact time by service type**

	Average non-contact time
Puna (n=1)	0.0
Kōhanga reo (n=8)	0.1
Education and care (n=12)	1.5
Home-based (n=3)	0.0
Kindergarten (n=8)	1.88
Pasifika (n=5)	1.4
Playcentre (n=8)	0.6
Playgroup (n=1)	0.0

* 2= more than two hours per person per week; 1=paid non-contact time but less than 2 hours per person per week; 0=no paid non-contact time

Not surprisingly, kindergarten, education and care and Pasifika centre teachers rated non-contact time as more adequate than educators/kaiako in the other services.

Stronger collaborative relationships

Cohesion of education birth – 8 years

Relationships with parents in the interests of children

Playcentre, Pasifika centres and kōhanga reo, had the strongest relationships with parents, with parents in more of these services contributing to assessment and planning for their child and following up activities at home, and being satisfied that the teacher/educators provides enough information about their child. In playcentre, parents are the educators working together to deliver the programme, and the last question was not entirely appropriate to ask of them.

Relationships with schools to support transition

Of all services, puna and kōhanga reo had the strongest relationships, and these were with kura when there was one in the locality. There was wide variability across services and little sharing of pedagogical approaches or information when a child went to school. Relationships seemed to be fairly dependent on the perspectives of the new entrant teacher or principal about the value of such relationships and their willingness to play an active role.

Relationships with ECE services to provide mutual support

Services with umbrella structures (kindergartens, playcentres, and kōhanga reo) had the strongest relationships with their own type, meeting in clusters for training, professional development and support and sometimes sharing information and support with other services.

There were locality differences, with Nikau (city suburb), where education and care networks are operating, being especially strong.

More integrated services to children, parents, families and whānau

Relationships with health services

Overall, sample services except puna and playgroup tended to have strong relationships with health services, seeing these as productive in the interests of children's health, available when needed and of consistent good quality.

Relationships with GSE

Relationships with GSE were variable, with some services reporting no relationships and others stronger ones. In one locality, Kauri (small town and rural), GSE did not have contact with some services.

Relationships with Māori and iwi

All eight kōhanga reo and the puna had a strong relationship with Māori and iwi, and whānau considered this to be essential to the kaupapa. Fifty-four percent of services with a high percentage of Māori (over 20 percent) had no or limited relationships with Māori and iwi. Teacher/educators in many non-kōhanga reo said they wanted to develop the relationship further but many were deterred by not knowing what to do or not feeling confident.

Table 44:   **Strength of relationship with Māori and iwi**

	No relationship %	Some relationship %	Moderately strong relationship %	Strong relationship %
Low Māori (n=23)	49	30	13	4
High Māori (n=24)	25	29	8	38

Relationships with Pacific communities

Pasifika centres had strong relationships with Pacific communities, as did a puna. Overall, sixty percent of services had no relationships with Pacific communities, with all but one being in centres with lower proportions of Pasifika children (under 20 percent).

Table 45:   **Strength of relationship with Pasifika communities**

	No relationship	Some relationship	Moderately strong relationship	Strong relationship
Low Pasifika (n=39)	69	15	10	3
High Pasifika (n=8)	13	0	63	25

Those non-Pasifika centres that did have relationships tended to hold these through their Pacific parents.

Relationships between indicators

We analysed whether there were relationships between indicators using Kendall Tau-b correlation coefficients. Here we report on relationships between indicators highlighting where the p-value is less than 0.01.

One related group of items was the strength of indicators of using Te Whāriki, assessment, planning and evaluation, and self review; and the strength of indicators of staff qualifications, professional development, leadership support, relationships with ECE services to provide mutual support and amount of non-contact time. Stronger relationships with schools were also correlated with stronger indicators of assessment linked to Te Whāriki (0.348, p=0.007) and planning and evaluation (0.3629, p=0.007).

One explanation for these relationships is that staff qualifications, professional support, leadership support and professional relationships with other ECE services contribute to strength of indicators of confidence in understanding and using Te Whāriki and assessment, planning and evaluative processes. This interpretation is consistent with research evidence (Whitebrook, 2003) on the contribution of staff qualifications to aspects of ECE quality, and adds to information (Mitchell & Cubey, 2003) on the role of professional development in supporting ECE quality. Non-contact time is also key, with relationships between adequacy of time and many indicators of strong teaching and learning processes. Participants in services where there is no or little paid non-contact time for assessment, planning, evaluation and self-review may choose not to undertake these processes or have limited time for them, since they have to be carried out in their own time. If the interpretation is correct it lends weight to the goal of improving qualifications, and to the view that professional development and leadership support are important aspects of the strategic plan.

Table 46:   **Correlations for selected indicators**

Indicator	Use of Te Whāriki	Predicted problems Te Whāriki	Future qualified teachers	Leader-ship support	Strong profess-ional support	Assess-ment linked to Te Whāriki	Planning and evaluat-ion	Self review	Amount of non-contact time
Predicted problems Te Whāriki									
Future qualified teachers									
Future registered teachers			0.856***						
Leadership support	0.405**								
Strong professional support	0.358**		0.567**	0.662***					
Assessment linked to Te Whāriki	0.447**	-0.507***			0.29*				
Planning and evaluation	0.334*	-0.396**	0.455*		0.377*	0.461**			
Self review	0.414**	-0.552***	0.430*	0.279*	0.405**	0.644***	0.353*		
Amount of non contact time	0.554***			0.416**		0.397**	0.329*	0.341*	
Relationships with ECE services		-0.451***	0.425*		0.416**	0.385**	0.583***	0.321*	0.326*

$*$ $p < 0.01$, $**$ p between 0.01 and 0.001 $***$ $p > 0.001$

We found patterns of relationships between aspects of teacher qualifications, professional support, use of Te Whāriki, planning and evaluation, amount of non-contact time and overall ratings of quality, and all sub-indicators of process quality except culture and inclusion. We have included in this table the contributing factor *Adults work well as a team* (observed by the field researcher during the education programme). The item has correlations with assessment, planning and evaluation, and self review.

Table 47: **Correlations for selected indicators and ratings of quality**

Indicator	Adults are responsive and extend children	Children complete work and concentrate	Children support, co-operate and co-construct learning	Education programme	Culture and inclusion	Adults work as a team	Average overall rating
Future qualified teachers	0.450**	0.528**					0.356*
Future registered teachers		0.587***					0.356*
Leadership support							
Strong professional support			0.361**	0.290*			0.354**
Te Whāriki is used		0.393***		0.294*			
Assessment linked to Te Whāriki						0.469***	
Planning and evaluation	0.292*			0.352**		0.522***	0.359**
Self review	0.276*	0.433**				0.348**	
Amount of non contact time		0.306*		0.292*			
Leadership support	0.246*		0.262*	0.304**			

* p <0.01, ** p between 0.01 and 0.001 *** p> 0.001

Quality ratings correlated with each other.

Table 48: **Correlations among ratings of quality**

Indicator	Adults are responsive	Children complete work and concentrate	Children support and co-operate	Education programme	Culture and inclusion	Adults work as a team
Children complete work and concentrate	0.371***					
Children support and co-operate	0.413***	0.293**				
Education programme	0.431***	0.338**	0.468***			
Culture and inclusion	0.355***	0.283**	0.450***	0.412***		
Adults work as a team	0.445***	0.380***			0.303**	
Average overall rating	0.639***	0.470***	0.590***	0.685***	0.585***	0.410***

* p <0.01, ** p between 0.01 and 0.001 *** p> 0.001

Some indicators had correlations with waiting lists for children and regular attendance. Most of these are with waiting lists for eligible children wanting a place, suggesting that the service is sought after and popular. The indicators about stronger relationships (with schools, ECE services, with Pasifika), and conditions to support relationships (non-contact time, leadership support), as well as the quality of the overall education programme, may be features that appeal to parents or through which parents find out about the service.

Table 49:   **Correlations for selected indicators with waiting list and regular attendance**

Indicator	Waiting list for different hours/days	Waiting list for eligible children wanting a place	Regular attendance
Regular attendance		0.344* p=0.016	
Te Whāriki is used	0.318* p=0.031		
No future problems with Te Whāriki		0.364* p=0.012	
Assessment linked to Te Whāriki		0.327* p=0.021	
Planning and evaluation	0.341* p=0.031		0.357* p=0.019
Amount of non-contact time	0.333* p=0.026	0.302* p=0.032	
Leadership support	0.341* p=0.013	0.402** p=0.003	
Relationships with Pasifika		0.339* p=0.015	
Relationships with schools		0.302* p=0.023	
Relationships with ECE	0.327* p=0.019	0.327* 0.017	
Education programme	0.305* p=0.015	0.335** 0.007	

6 Parent perspectives

In this section we focus on information from parents, both to give an overview of parent experiences from what is one of the few sizeable NZ samples of parents using ECE services, and to chart any marked differences in views between locations, and service types. We have included some analysis by service type because of the questions that arose in our minds about the impact of the long-term strategic plan as we looked at existing patterns of service use in the different locations, particularly dual attendance, and the different roles that different types seem to be playing. For example, though playcentre, education and care, and kindergarten could all cater to 3- and 4-year-olds, in fact the percentage of children attending playcentre and education and care was at its highest at age 3-years, while kindergarten was at its highest at age 4-years. This raises issues for other nearby services if a playcentre proves unsustainable, or an education and care centre reaches its capacity and sees no reason to expand.

This sample should not be expected to be representative of national enrolments, since this locality-based evaluation's sample is a cross-section of ECE types in 8 different localities across the country. There are sufficient numbers of parents in each type (other than playgroup and puna) to allow some analysis that, put with other information, can be useful to understanding what impact the ECE strategic plan may have.

Because some parents had two children at one service, parents were asked to answer questions about their oldest child attending the ECE service in the sample, so that we could link answers, for example, between cost and hours of attendance.

Table 50: **ECE type used by parents responding**

	(n=886)	%
Kindergarten	360	41
Education and care	208	23
Kōhanga reo	142	16
Playcentre	79	9
Pasifika	52	6
Home-based	33	4
Playgroup	6	1
Puna	6	1

* Twenty-two parents filled in surveys for more than one ECE service.

Parents were not surveyed in an education and care service catering for refugees (three focus groups were held), and the results for the early intervention service are not included here, because of small numbers.

We have conservatively estimated the response rate for the parent surveys in terms of the number of enrolments at the sample services as given in the RS 61 for June 2004 (this is conservative because some families may have more than one child at a service, and because not every parent would have received a questionnaire, particularly for teacher-led sessional services). The average response rate across the services was 39 percent, ranging from 11 to 90 percent. There were no marked locality differences in average response rates. Playcentres had the highest response rates (an average of 52 percent, and kindergartens, the lowest (23 percent).

Social characteristics of the parents responding

The tables below describe parental income levels, their ethnicity, and whether they were in paid work. Most parents responding were female (86 percent), with 10 percent male, and 5 percent who did not give their gender.

Table 51: **Parents' ethnicity***

	(n=886)	%
NZ European/Pākehā	474	54
NZ Māori	239	27
Pacific	77	9
Asian	36	4
Other	20	2
Missing	40	5

* Since some gave more than one ethnicity, we prioritised this using the 1996 Census approach: If Māori was included in the ethnicities given, they were categorised as Maori, if any Pacific ethnicity, as Pacific, and if any Asian, then Asian, if NZ European and other European, as NZ European.

Table 52: **Household income levels**

	(n=886)	%
Less than $20,000	137	15
$20–29,000	101	11
$30–49,000	243	27
$50–69,000	139	16
> $70,000	117	13

Not sure = 81 (9 percent); no answer = 68 (8 percent).

Table 53: **Parents and paid work**

	(n=886)	%
Not in paid work	367	41
Part-time paid work	285	32
Full-time paid work	194	22

No answer: 40 (5 percent).

Playcentre, kindergarten and kōhanga reo parents responding to the questionnaire were less likely to be in paid employment than others. Playcentre parents were least likely to be working full-time (4 percent), as were kindergarten parents (14 percent). Pohutakawa, Kauri, and Totara had somewhat higher proportions of parents not

in paid work. Part-time work was less frequent for ECE parents in Kauri and Kowhai—where full-time work was more frequent than in the other six localities. Full-time work was least likely in Nikau.

ECE attendance patterns and parent views

ECE attendance for the children whose parents responded to the survey from the sample services ranged from two hours a week typically, to 50 hours. The average number of hours showed some variation by locality, ranging from 13.81 hours a week in Nikau, to 21.21 hours in Kowhai. This is probably related to differences in the patterns of parental work noted above.

Only 9 percent of the parents responding said the times their child attended ECE did not suit [but bear in mind that this study does not include parents whose child does not attend an ECE service]. Of these, what was wanted in preference was quite varied, with similar numbers wanting their child to attend morning sessions (particularly in Nikau and Totara), all-day (particularly in Pohutakawa and Rata), every day of the week (particularly in Karaka), during school hours (particularly in Karaka and Rata), and during school term breaks (particularly in Totara).

Kindergarten parents (12 percent) and Pasifika centre parents (13 percent) were more likely to say that the times their child attended did not suit. Kindergarten parents were more likely to want mornings only, all day, school hours, or every day of the week; Pasifika centre parents to want all day ECE. The main reasons kindergarten parents gave for their not being able to have these hours was that the kindergarten did not provide the times wanted, or it had no places at the desired time. Pasifika centre and education and care parents were more likely to say that the extra time they wanted was too expensive.

Average hours of attendance were lowest in the sessional ECE services, and also in home-based services. Home-based and education and care services had the widest range of attendance patterns.

Table 54: **Average hours of ECE attendance per week by type**

	Average hours	Range (hours)
Kindergarten (338)	12.23	2.5–23
Education and care (197)	20.08	3–50
Kōhanga reo (126)	31.49	6–42
Playcentre (77)	6.14	2.5–12.5
Home-based (33)	13.85	6–47.5

Because of the provision in the long-term strategic plan to provide 20 hours free early childhood education for children aged 3 and 4 years of age in teacher-led services, we compared patterns of attendance for those under 3 (about a quarter of the sample), and those aged 3 or more years. These were similar for attendance up to 15 hours a week, and then showed some divergence.

Table 55: **Attendance in relation to age**

	Under 3 years old (n=193) %	3 years old + (n=627) %
	50	47
15–20 hours	6	23
20.–30 hours	21	14
30.–40 hours	13	8
40–50 hours	5	3

66 (7 percent) did not give their oldest child's age.

Children under three were more likely to be on a waiting list for another service (11 percent compared with 7 percent of 3- and 4-year-olds), and less likely to be attending more than one ECE service (16 percent compared with 22 percent).

Age and type

The table below shows some differences in the age-range served by different types, which may have implications for provision considered locally. Home-based services had a higher proportion of children under two-years old than other services. Its age distribution after that is steady, as are the two services that appeal to distinct groups because of their particular programmes, kōhanga reo and Pasifika centres. Playcentre and education and care 'peak' at age 3, with fewer children at age 4, probably because children have switched to kindergarten.

Table 56: **Age range and ECE types**

	Under 2 years old %	2–3 years old %	3 years old %	4 years old %
Kindergarten (360)	0	1	25	64
Education and care (208)	14	24	32	26
Kōhanga reo (142)	13	16	33	32
Playcentre (79)	9	30	35	20
Pasifika (52)	15	21	19	29
Home-based (33)	30	18	21	21

Dual attendance

Twenty percent of the parents said their child attended more than one ECE service. Dual attendance increased with child's age, from 14 percent of those aged under 2, to 23 percent of 3-year-olds. Parents who combined two or more centres were no more likely than others to be on a waiting list for another service. They were just as likely to say that their choice of ECE service met their needs. Parents who gave reasons for dual attendance seem to be choosing combinations based mainly on overall considerations of hours available in a service, cost, and programmes. For example:

Hours

> *Because it meets on a morning when there is not a kindergarten session.*

> *Kindergarten hours do not suit with my work hours.*

Cost

> *Family help look after children when needed. Can't afford extra childcare.*

> *It is very expensive for me.*

Educational programme

> *Kindergarten is preparing my boy for school and has a well resourced place. Barnardos is providing my boy with a substitute mummy.*

> *More structured learning session.*

They may see their particular combination as offering a desirable balance (for example, of centre and home-based care; or socialisation once a week with children who are likely to attend the local school with centres that draw from wider populations).

Locality differences

Localities where children were more likely to attend more than one service were Karaka, Rimu, Nikau, and Rata. (See Table 1 for a description of the localities). These four localities had lower proportions of Maori and/or Pacific people than the other four localities. The Department of Labour and National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women (1999) *New Zealand Childcare Survey: 1998* found increasing dual attendance with age. This national trend of increasing dual attendance with age also existed in these four localities. These findings suggest that there is a need to collect information at the local level on dual attendance, since it may have implications for local provision and participation.

Reflecting the local population growth and services' existing capacity, Nikau parents were twice as likely as the overall proportion to say they were on a waiting list (16 percent compared with 7 percent). No parents said they were on a waiting list in Kauri, a locality with low levels of ECE participation.

Type differences

Dual attendance was more likely for children who attended playcentre (35 percent) or education and care services (33 percent), and least likely for those who went to kōhanga reo (4 percent), or a pasifika centre (6 percent). Dual attendance for playcentre attendees increased with age, from 25 percent for 2-year-olds to 56 percent of 4-year-

olds. Dual attendance for children from education and care services was highest for both the youngest and oldest age-groups (27 percent of 2-year-olds, and 31 percent of 4-year-olds).

Parental satisfaction

65 percent said their overall level of satisfaction with their child's ECE service was very good, 26 percent said it was good, and 6 percent said it was satisfactory. None said it was unsatisfactory. Pacific centre parents were somewhat less likely to say their level of satisfaction was very good (44 percent). Rata (13 percent) and Kowhai parents (8 percent) were more likely to say it was (only) satisfactory.

92 percent of the parents felt welcome at their child's ECE service.

82 percent thought they got enough details about their child's progress at the service, though 31 percent would also like more information, particularly Pacific parents (52 percent).

Seven percent (n=64) of the parents overall had their child on a waiting list for another service. Twenty percent of these said their choice of service did not meet their needs, compared with 9 percent of those who were not on a waiting list for another service.

Affordability

Affordability reflected family income levels. Thirty-one percent of those with household incomes of less than $30,000 said they could barely afford or could not afford their child's ECE service, decreasing to 14 percent of those whose family income was $70,000 or more.

Parents in the highest income bracket were least likely to spend less than $10 a week (21 percent compared with 31 percent overall). They were most likely to spend more than $60 a week (41 percent, decreasing to 15 percent of those with incomes under $30,000).

We have data from 701 parents on how much they spent a week on their oldest child's ECE service. Of these,

- 39 percent of the parents said they spent less than $10 a week on ECE,
- 35 percent spent between $10 and $59, and
- 26 percent spent more than $60.

Only 9 percent of those who spent less than $10 a week had problems affording it, compared with 33 percent of those who spent between $10 and $60, and 40 percent of those who spent $60 or more.

Cost was related to the number of hours used. For these 701 parents,

- 34 percent used ECE services for their oldest child for less than 10 hours a week,
- 31 percent used them for between 10–19.9 hours, and
- 32 percent used them for 20 hours or more.

Table 57:   **Cost of ECE related to hours used**

Cost (n=701)	Under 10 hours a week %	10–19.9 hours %	20+ hours %
< $10	50	23	4
$10–59	33	37	15
$60 +	10	25	48

Forty-two percent of those whose children spent 20 hours or more at an ECE centre had problems affording these hours. This decreased to 32 percent of those whose child spent between 10 to 20 hours, and to 19 percent of those whose child spent less than 10 hours a week in an ECE service.

Affordability was unrelated to the age of the child. The average weekly cost was higher for children under 3 years ($55.72 compared with $30.14 for those aged three or four years old).

Locality differences

Kowhai parents were more likely as others to have some difficulty affording the cost of their child's ECE service (35 percent compared with 24 percent overall). Rata and Rimu parents were least likely to have difficulty (16 and 14 percent respectively).

Type differences

Four types of ECE service had similar levels of parent experiencing some difficulty affording their cost: education and care (33 percent), Pasifika (33 percent), home-based services (30 percent), and kōhanga reo (27 percent). Playcentre parents were least likely to have difficulty affording the cost of their child's ECE service (4 percent), followed by kindergarten parents (22 percent). This is reflected in the average weekly amounts parents said they paid for each type.

Table 58:   **Average cost of ECE per week by type**

	Average cost	Range
Kindergarten (281)	$6.91	$2–$21
Education and care—community (66)	$57.84	$7–$200
Education and care—private (120)	$88.82	$2–$280
Kōhanga reo (104)	$53.61	$2.50–$100
Playcentre (53)	$2.98	$–$6
Pasifika (45)	$25.67	$0–$100
Home-based (29)	$55.37	$5–$220

Views of the affordability of their child's ECE were much the same for parents who used community or privately-owned education and care centres. Though the latter had higher average costs, their child was also attending more hours on average (22.31 hours compared with 15.76 hours for children attending community-owned centres). Because of the provision starting in 2007 for 20 hours free ECE for 3- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led community-

owned centres[18], we looked separately at this. Only 12 percent (n=25) of the 208 children attending ECE services were aged three or four-years old. Views of affordability were the same for both services. Children attending the community-owned centres attended for 16.94 hours a week on average (a range of 4 to 30 hours a week), with higher average attendance for those attending privately-owned centres, an average of 36.07, a range from 6.5 hours to 50 hours a week.

While parents spent less in dollar terms for some ECE services, they were more likely to contribute their time. The overall proportion of those who helped or worked at their child's ECE service was 44 percent.

Table 59: **Parental work/help at their child's ECE service**

	Proportion of parents working/helping %
Kindergarten (360)	49
Education and care (208)	13
Kōhanga reo (142)	51
Playcentre (79)	99
Pasifika (52)	56
Home-based (33)	0

Reflecting differences in the ECE types included in each locality sample, and patterns of parental employment, parents in Rata, Nikau, and Kauri were more likely to spend some time helping or working in their child's centre; it was less likely to occur in Kowhai and Totara.

Reasons for going to an ECE service

Type differences

Bearing in mind that there are different patterns of attendance at the different ECE types for different ages, the following section notes statistically significant points of difference in parents' reasons for their child's participation in the particular ECE type, focusing on ratings of these reasons as 'very important'. Children's learning and social skills were more important to parents than their own work or training needs, but came close for users of all-day services. Some services appear to be appealing to parents for a wider range of reasons than others—particularly Pasifika and kōhanga reo, and therefore also have a wider range of needs or expectations to meet—and others may be seen as more 'specialist', e.g. kindergarten.

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[18] The "20 hours free ECE" policy was extended to all teacher-led services, including privately owned services, in June 2005 after data for this phase was collected.

Table 60:   **Patterns of parent reasons for child attendance at given ECE service**

Reason	Overall proportion rating this as very important %	Service types that differed markedly from overall proportion
Child has opportunities to learn	73	Kindergarten (82%) Home-based (58%)
Child develops a love of learning	67	Home-based (39%) ECCE (55%)
Child learns to socialise	67	None
Child's confidence increases	66	Home-based (48%) ECCE (56%)
Child gets ready for school	52	Kindergarten (72%); Playcentre (22%), Home-based (21%), ECCE (34%)
Parent can work/train	29	Home-based service (61%) Pasifika (60%), ECCE (49%); Kindergarten (13%), Playcentre (5%)
Child learns own language & culture	27	Kōhanga reo (82%), Pasifika (58%)
Parent can learn about child development	26	Pasifika (46%), playcentre (42%), kōhanga reo (41%)
Support the service kaupapa	17	Kōhanga reo (54%), Pasifika (35%)
Parent can help at the ECE service	14	Pasifika (44%), playcentre (33%), kōhanga reo (26%)
Parent can do other things	14	Pasifika (38%), home-based service (33%; playcentre (1%)
Parent can use own language & culture	13	Kōhanga reo (43%), Pasifika (40%)
Parent can meet others	13	Pasifika (40%), playcentre (34%), kōhanga reo (22%).
Break from childcare	8	Pasifika (27%), home-based (24%)

There are fewer differences in relation to service type when it comes to the characteristics parents value most in an ECE service (using their rating of an aspect as 'very important' to them). Users of home-based services and playcentre parents put less emphasis on some aspects than do others, and Pasifika centre parents, more emphasis.

Table 61: **Parents' views of desirable ECE service characteristics**

Characteristic	Overall proportion rating this as very important %	Types differing markedly from overall proportion
Warm & nurturing staff	88	None
High standards of health & safety	86	Home-based (70%), playcentre (75%)
Friendly staff	85	None
Children happy & settled	87	None
Well resourced	73	Home-based (42%)
Good quality ECE programme	75	Home-based (42%), playcentre (62%)
Qualified staff	67	Home-based (39%), playcentre (39%)
High adult:child ratios	52	None
Good reputation	52	Playcentre (32%)
Good ERO report	39	Home-based (24%), playcentre (23%)
Not too expensive	32	Pasifika (60%)
Hours that suit	32	Pasifika (71%), Home-based (55%); kindergarten (18%), playcentre (20%)
Culturally appropriate programme	26	Kōhanga reo (65%), Pasifika (60%)
Attractive building & space	26	Pasifika (48%)
Close to my home	20	Pasifika (46%)
Close to my work	13	Pasifika (38%), Home-based (21%)

There was not an exact match between the value that was put on these characteristics, and how well they were being met in their child's ECE service. Some aspects have a lower proportion of parents saying their needs are being very well met than said the particular aspect was very important to them (e.g. high adult:child ratios); and the other way round for other aspects (e.g. attractive buildings and spaces). The next table shows the proportion of parents who said an aspect met their needs very well, following the same descending order of the proportions who said an aspect was very important. There are some type differences. Some reflect different characteristics of services, e.g. kindergartens' employment of qualified staff, but fewer adults to work with children. Playcentre parents rated many aspects lower than did others.

One would expect the overall proportions to increase as the strategic plan is implemented and there is some improvement in quality and provision (though parent expectations may also grow).

Table 62:   **How well parents thought their child's ECE service met their needs – type differences**

Characteristic	Overall proportion rating their needs as very well met %	Types differing markedly from overall proportion
Warm & nurturing staff	72	Playcentre (57%)
High standards of health & safety	62	Playcentre (37%), Pasifika (48%)
Friendly staff	76	Playcentre (63%)
Children happy & settled	73	None
Well resourced	65	Kindergarten (74%); Pasifika (42%), playcentre (51%), home-based (52%)
Good quality ECE programme	60	Kōhanga reo (74%); Playcentre (35%), home-based (48%), Pasifika (48%)
Qualified staff	62	Kindergarten (75%); Playcentre (34%)
High adult:child ratios	44	Playcentre (76%), home-based (70%); kindergarten (33%)
Good reputation	59	Kōhanga reo (76%), playcentre (35%)
Good ERO report	45	Kōhanga reo (67%); Home-based (27%), playcentre (32%), ECCE (36%)
Not too expensive	51	Pasifika (67%), playcentre (65%), kōhanga reo (65%); ECCE (25%)
Hours that suit	56	Home-based (76%) Pasifika (71%); playcentre (46%)
Culturally appropriate programme	45	Kōhanga reo (78%), Pasifika (65%); ECCE (30%), playcentre (35%)
Attractive building & space	48	Playcentre (35%),
Close to my home	49	Home-based (61%), Pasifika (58%)
Close to my work	31	Pasifika (50%); home-based (39%); playcentre (22%)*

* Playcentre parents were less likely to be in paid work

Parent-teacher contact

Two-fifths of the parents talked with ECE staff about their child at each session, or each day. (differences between each session or each day probably reflect differences in provision or attendance). Such interaction, or exchange of information which could support a child's learning and engagement, was most likely in the services that had higher teacher/educator:child ratios, or which were all-day.

Table 63:   **Frequency of parent talk with teacher about the child**

Frequency	Overall proportion %	Types differing markedly from overall proportion
Every session	21	Playcentre (49%), home-based (48%); Pasifika (2%), kōhanga reo (7%)
Every day	21	Pasifika (37%), ECCE (34%), kōhanga reo (28%); Playcentre (17%), kindergarten (13%)
Once a week	33	Home-based (18%), playcentre (15%)
Once a month	16	Kōhanga reo (24%); Home-based (6%), playcentre (6%), ECCE (8%)
Never	3	None

* Five percent did not answer this question.

Thirty percent of the parents would like more opportunity to talk with their child's teachers. Pasifika centre parents were more likely to want this (48 percent); home-based service parents, less likely (9 percent). Sixteen percent of the parents said there was not always a suitable time to talk with the teacher, 11 percent that the teacher was too busy, but 10 percent said they themselves were too busy.

Topics that parents talked about with their child's teacher were similar across services, with more talk about curriculum in two parent/whānau led service types.

Table 64:   **Topics of parent- ECE teacher talk**

Topic	Overall proportion %	Types differing markedly from overall proportion
Child's progress	87	None
Child's behaviour	69	None
What child does at home	46	Kindergarten (39%)
What parent can do to help child's learning	39	None
Topics other than child	35	Home-based (58%), Playcentre (53%)
Curriculum	19	Playcentre (29%), kōhanga reo (29%)

Kōhanga reo parents were the most enthusiastic about the quality of information received from their child's teacher/s; playcentre the least—though this difference needs to be seen with the caveat that around a fifth of the playcentre parents responding did not answer this question, probably because paid teachers in playcentres may work with parents as part of a team of educators, with a somewhat different status, and some playcentre parents thought these questions were less applicable to them, compared with 5 percent not answering overall.

Table 65:   **Parent views of information received from ECE teachers**

View	Overall proportion %	Types differing markedly from overall proportion
Enough details given about child's progress	82	Playcentre (65%)
Very useful information about child's overall learning programme	43	Kōhanga reo (65%); ECCE (35%), playcentre (23%)
Very useful information about child's progress	50	Kōhanga reo (65%), playcentre 34%
Very useful information about child's interests & abilities	51	Kōhanga reo (68%), playcentre (34%)
Very useful information about whether child is happy & settled	62	Kōhanga reo (73%), playcentre (42%)
Very useful information about ECE curriculum	30	Kōhanga reo (49%); Pasifika (44%) Home-based (9%), playcentre (16%), ECCE (19%)

Locality differences

Because we are following what happens over time around the same set of services in each locality, to see how the long-term strategic plan affects them, we looked at the patterns of parent reasons for their child's attendance and parent-teacher contact by locality as well.

Some differences found will reflect the different sets of ECE service types we have in each locality, and different patterns of parent need related to employment. Thus, in Kowhai, where there was a higher proportion of parents in full-time employment, we see more emphasis on using ECE so that parents can work or train. But we also see the latter emphasis given more prominence in Pohutakawa, suggesting that all-day affordable ECE services are important there. Most of the differences found between localities reflect parental needs rather than views about what children gain from their ECE attendance. The particular 'niches' of te kōhanga reo and pasifika centres as vehicles for language and cultural maintenance are also evident in some localities where these were particularly marked.

Table 66: **Patterns of parent reasons for child attendance at given ECE service – locality differences**

Reason	Overall proportion rating this as very important %	Localities differing markedly from overall proportion
Child has opportunities to learn	73	None
Child develops a love of learning	67	None
Child learns to socialise	67	None
Child's confidence increases	66	None
Child gets ready for school	52	Kauri (66%), Kowhai (64%); Karaka (38%)
Parent can work/train	29	Kowhai (39%), Pohutakawa (36%); Nikau (22%), Karaka (23%)
Child learns own language & culture	27	Pohutakawa (52%), Kauri (39%); Nikau, Rimu, Rata (16% or less)
Parent can learn about child development	26	Pohutakawa (41%), Kauri (33%); Rimu (14%), Karaka (16%), Nikau (17%)
Support the service kaupapa	17	Pohutakawa (33%), Kauri (28%)
Parent can help at the ECE service	14	Pohutakawa (29%), Kauri (23%); Nikau (3%), Rimu (6%)
Parent can do other things	14	Kowhai (21%), Pohutakawa (17%); Rimu (9%), Totara (10%)
Parent can use own language & culture	13	Pohutakawa (33%), Kauri (19%)
Parent can meet others	13	Kauri (21%); Rimu, Nikau (6%)
Break from childcare	8	None

Parental needs also related to some differences between localities when it came to parent views on what ECE service characteristics were very important to them.

Table 67: **Parents' views of desirable ECE service characteristics – locality differences**

Characteristic	Overall proportion rating this as very important %	Localities differing markedly from overall proportion
Warm & nurturing staff	88	None
High standards of health & safety	86	None
Friendly staff	85	None
Children happy & settled	87	None
Well resourced	73	None
Good quality ECE programme	75	Rimu (65%)
Qualified staff	67	Karaka (56%)
High adult:child ratios	52	None
Good reputation	52	Kauri (68%); Totara (41%)
Good ERO report	39	Kowhai (51%); Rata (28%)
Not too expensive	32	Kauri (45%), Kowhai (41%)
Hours that suit	32	Kauri (45%), Kowhai (42%)
Culturally appropriate programme	26	Pohutakawa (50%), Kauri (38%)
Attractive building & space	26	Kowhai (35%); Rimu (19%)
Close to my home	20	Kauri (28%), Kowhai (30%), Pohutakawa (32%)
Close to my work	13	Kauri (22%), Kowhai (20%), Pohutakawa (16%)

Staff qualifications mattered somewhat less to parents in one rural locality—yet as we see in the next table, parents in this locality were also less likely to think that their needs for qualified staff were being very well met. Rata parents were somewhat less likely to think that their needs were very well met.

Table 68: **How well parents thought their child's ECE service met their needs – locality differences**

Characteristic	Overall proportion rating their needs as very well met %	Localities differing markedly from overall proportion
Warm & nurturing staff	72	None
High standards of health & safety	62	None
Friendly staff	76	None
Children happy & settled	73	Rata (62%)
Well resourced	65	None
Good quality ECE programme	60	Rata (46%)
Qualified staff	62	Karaka (51%)
High adult:child ratios	44	Rata (33%)
Good reputation	59	Kauri (80%), Rimu (70%); Karaka (45%), Kowhai (47%), Nikau (48%)
Good ERO report	45	Kauri (55%), Pohutakawa (53%)
Not too expensive	51	None
Hours that suit	56	Kauri (69%)
Culturally appropriate programme	45	Pohutakawa (61%)
Attractive building & space	48	None
Close to my home	49	None
Close to my work	31	None

Parent-teacher contact

There were no marked locality differences in how often parents talked with their child's teacher. However, Pohutakawa parents wanted more opportunity to talk with teachers (41 percent compared with 30 percent overall), though they were also more likely to say that they were too busy (16 percent compared with 10 percent overall).

Karaka parents were somewhat less likely to talk with their child's teacher about their child.

Table 69: **Topics of parent- ECE teacher talk – locality differences**

Topic	Overall proportion %	Localities differing markedly from overall proportion
Child's progress	87	None
Child's behaviour	69	Karaka (59%)
What child does at home	46	None
What parent can do to help child's learning	39	Karaka (25%), Rimu (29%)
Topics other than child	35	None
Curriculum	19	Kauri (32%),

Karaka parents were also somewhat less enthusiastic about the quality of information they received from the child's teacher.

Table 70: **Parent views of information received from ECE teachers – locality analysis**

View	Overall proportion %	Localities differing markedly from overall proportion
Enough details given about child's progress	82	Karaka (66%)
Very useful information about child's overall learning programme	43	None
Very useful information about child's progress	50	None
Very useful information about child's interests & abilities	51	None
Very useful information about whether child is happy & settled	62	Karaka (49%)
Very useful information about ECE curriculum	30	Pohutakawa (47%)

Discussion

There are a number of aspects that emerge through parents' responses that are particularly relevant to the strategic plan goals.

• The incidence of dual attendance and the patterns found in this study suggest that it is worth looking at this in relation to the provision and participation goals of the strategic plan at both the national and local levels. The particular pattern of services and attendance, or the 'jigsaw'—of services locally available, seems to be important to consider, as well as overall roll numbers.

- It may be that a sizeable proportion of parents do not expect a single service to provide all the aspects of ECE that they see as desirable for their child's development, unless they are also trying to balance their own employment needs. While in an abstract sense it does not matter if individual services close, it may matter if those who it has served (and to whom it may have appealed in the future) do not have suitable alternatives, not just in terms of hours, cost, proximity, or programme, but also in terms of balances they may have made across different ECE types. Dual attendance patterns may also have implications for services that are considering extending their hours: it may be that, for example, a kindergarten extending its hours needs to give preference to children who will stay for the longer hours, at the cost of those who are also attending another service, and issues could arise if this other service(s) are not able to offer the additional hours needed by those who dual attend, or not able to offer the programme which appealed.

- Children attending kōhanga reo and Pasifika centres were most likely to attend only one service, and the role of these services in supporting language and culture, for children and parents alike, is a clear purpose that does make them distinct within a local context. This has implications for considering the mix of services available in a given locality, and their sustainability.

- Parents of children attending Pasifika centres had the widest range of expectations that their centre would meet in relation to parental needs. Cost was also a particular concern for these parents.

- Parents whose children attended playcentre were less likely to think that their service was meeting their needs very well. This is consistent with other information coming from this report, and from the two other studies done recently for the Ministry of Education, An evaluation of initial uses and impact of Equity Funding (Mitchell, Royal Tangaere, Mara, & Wylie, 2006a) and Quality in parent/whānau-led services (Mitchell, Royal Tangaere, Mara, & Wylie, 2006b), on tensions for these parent-led centres. These will need addressing if playcentres are to remain part of the provision 'jigsaw'

- The main locality differences in parental views were related to parental employment, rather than any differences in values placed on ECE in relation to children's development. This is relevant to the long-term strategic goal of parents valuing ECE, in relation to improved participation.

- One rural locality stood out as having a lower proportion than the other localities of parents thinking that their service met their needs very well. This can be related to its lower performance on the overall indicators.

7 Conclusion

In this conclusion we draw together the main themes from the analysis of baseline data, highlighting what they may mean for the impact of the strategic plan against the three strategic plan goals of increasing participation, improving quality and promoting collaborative relationships, and for provision of ECE within the eight localities and nationally.

Provision and participation

In this baseline phase, three aspects of provision and participation were found that could affect the strategic plan goal of promoting participation. These were the mix of services within a locality and their responsiveness to community needs, the participation patterns of children attending, and unique issues for parent and whānau-led services.

The mix of services in each locality, the age-groups they serve, and their weeks and hours of operation varied widely. The mix of service provision and extent to which it meets family needs can influence participation. In some localities there were particular pressures.

A small proportion of parents, slightly more from kindergarten and Pasifika services in each locality wanted different hours, days or times. Some kindergartens had changed their operation to cater for rural families' preferences for longer sessions. Pacific parents wanted the widest range of attributes from their service, including their language and cultural aspirations to be met, all day provision but not too expensive, parent support, and attributes associated with good quality ECE, posing some questions about individual Pasifika services' ability to provide all these.

Many children were enrolled in a combination of services, peaking at 23 percent of 4-year-olds. Their reasons for doing so sometimes indicate a desire for longer hours than one sessional service could provide, and sometimes a need to reduce ECE costs by combining lower and higher-cost options. But they also indicated that parents saw differences in programmes, and wanted their children to have a mix of different educational programmes and learning experiences. The findings from the baseline parent survey indicate that dual attendance patterns and reasons warrant further investigation, since they have implications for provision, and the effects of the free 20 hours ECE in teacher-led services for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Attendance was regular for 80 percent or more of the study children, but lower in low socio-economic localities.

These findings raise some questions. How do individual services know whether there are enough parents who would use their service to warrant change to their hours of operation? The Ministry of Education has undertaken network analyses in some localities, identified need for new provision in areas of low ECE enrolment, and made it a priority to support establishment of provision. As well, in one rural locality in this study it is aiming to boost

professional support for playgroups. These efforts have largely been confined to promoting enrolment in ECE, rather than tackling issues of irregular attendance, yet irregular attendance has implications for children's learning opportunities, and for service sustainability.

A higher percentage of playcentre and kōhanga reo were operating below capacity. Some playcentres were vulnerable with respect to ongoing viability and licensing status, and seemed to be becoming more an option for under threes, with enrolments peaking at age 3 years.

Playcentre had high levels of volunteer work, difficulties in attracting new parents and recruiting them to undertake the higher levels of playcentre training that are needed to fulfil supervisory requirements, and an ongoing turnover of parents. Playcentres were making a strong contribution to parental needs for learning and support.

Kōhanga reo pressures were associated with difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified fluent kaiako, and in attracting whānau to undertake kōhanga reo training. Kōhanga reo has a distinctive role with respect to te reo and tikanga Māori learning, and was meeting whānau aspirations for this kaupapa. Children attending kōhanga reo tended to stay with that option until school age.

The diversity and unique kaupapa of each of these services forms part of the ECE provision network. If any services were to decline, there would be flow-on effects to other services, which may not be able to cater for demand. This could impact on participation where there are no other options. Addressing vulnerabilities for these services seems important with respect to meeting strategic plan intermediate outcomes of sustainable and accessible ECE services.

There may be implications for provision when the free 20 hours for 3- and 4-year-olds in teacher-led ECE services is introduced in 2007. Would services currently catering for younger age groups focus on the 3- and 4-year-old ages, and what would happen to provision for younger children if they did? Parents of 3- and 4-year-olds attending less than 20 hours per week did not say they wanted different times, but what would they do if they were offered it? Would sessional services change their operation to extended day sessions and so reduce the number of places? Would the high incidence of dual enrolments change with free provision, and if so what would happen to the service that is longer attended? Is free provision only to be used in one service? We did not specifically ask parents a) if they want 20 free hours for their 3- and 4-year-olds, and b) what they would do when this happens. These issues can be explored in 2006.

There was a trend in services in lower income wards and those with EQI 1 and 2 to have more irregular attendance, with cost cited as a barrier.

Quality

The study found that quality in the sample services was generally at a medium level, but with considerable variability between services and across locations in indicators of adult interactions with children, children's interactions with each other, and the education programme that contribute to the child's learning environment and outcomes for children.

Understanding and use of Te Whāriki, and strength of assessment, planning and evaluation, and self review were also variable. Some teacher/educators found Te Whāriki hard to understand, and Pasifika centres wanted cultural resources to support its use.

Our analysis shows there are patterns of relationships between some indicators of strategic plan outcomes intended to promote quality for children (qualifications in teacher-led services, understanding and use of Te Whāriki, quality teaching and learning processes including planning and evaluation) and overall ratings of process quality. Structural aspects (staff qualifications, professional support, leadership support and relationships with ECE services) were related to teaching and learning practices. In addition, an element not included in strategic plan actions, paid non-contact time, was related to strength of assessment, planning and evaluation, self review and use of Te Whāriki.

There were pressures for most services in finding qualified relievers, and service differences with respect to meeting targets for qualified and registered teachers in teacher-led services. These raise questions about how well services will be placed with respect to meet ratios if they improve, and the importance of continuing to support recruitment and retention initiatives, and provide ongoing support for qualifications.

Access to and take-up of professional and leadership support varied widely. Services that did not have an infrastructure of professional support or wider professional networks in their community, and those in locations with limited choice of professional support had more difficulties. Services where management actively supported staff to undertake training rather than relying on recruitment of new staff found meeting qualification targets to be easier. A barrier to meeting registration requirements was not having access to a registration supervisor. Finding ways to address these issues of unequal take-up and opportunities for professional support is a challenge. How well the challenge is met is likely to impact on meeting strategic plan outcomes.

Collaborative relationships

While stronger collaborative relationships are a strategic plan goal, the actions to support it are not detailed, and these relationships are largely left to individual services within their localities. Strength of relationships depended on individuals or service support structures making connections.

There were service differences. Playcentre had very strong relationships with parents. Kōhanga reo stood out in having strong relationships with parents, kura, Māori and iwi. Pasifika services had strong relationships with Pacific communities and parents. Services with umbrella structures got together with other ECE services of the same type for mutual support and professional development, but others were reliant on there being a local network or forming it themselves.

Linkages with schools were more often initiated by the ECE service and tended to be dependent on the new entrant teacher or principal being open to forming relationships. There was little sharing of information about children, or pedagogical approaches, but nevertheless a few examples of these aspects working well.

Health services had strong connections with ECE services through visiting them to check health.

Views of the strategic plan

Overall, participants had varying reactions to the strategic plan, some regarding it as a government initiative and taking no responsibility themselves, with others actively engaged with the ideas of making progress and taking initiative for developing the quality and responsiveness of their own service. Views of the long-term strategic plan were often related to the current strength of a service. Playcentre people expressed greater vulnerability than others, and a sense of exclusion. This may reflect the lack of detail in the strategic plan to date in relation to parent-led ECE services.

8 Evaluators' reflections

The purpose of this report is to provide a picture of the ECE context prior to the mid-2004 policy changes as a baseline for comparison to map the changes that occur for parents and services between 2004 and 2006. This report therefore is primarily descriptive and subsequent evaluation reports will provide an analysis of the impact and outcomes of the strategic plan.

In this section, we offer our thoughts about issues and pressures raised by the initial evaluation findings. These are presented in relation to the participation, quality, and collaborative relationships goals of the strategic plan and may offer some fruitful suggestions for making the most of the strategic plan or focus attention on some key issues that are not so far addressed by it. It should be noted that these views are outside the scope of this phase of the evaluation and baseline report and do not reflect the views of the MOE.

Increasing participation

We have suggested it is important to consider the mix of services available in localities and their sustainability, since services were not always available where they were needed and were not always meeting the range of parental needs. In some localities, where ECE services were operating below capacity and under-five birth rates were declining, some services could close. Where these are the only ECE services or the only service of a type that parents want, and they close, parents would be left with no local options available to them. These factors could impact on the strategic plan goal of increasing participation.

To date, planning service provision has been largely done on an individual service basis. We suggest that in order to develop responsive services that are provided where they are needed, it could be valuable for the MOE to trial working with a community to develop a coherent pattern of service provision in that community. This would require comprehensive analysis of demographic information and assessment of community need, and direct provision or support to provide or adapt services where change is warranted. Supporting services to be responsive to community need may also help them to become more attractive to parents and so support regular attendance.

Local bodies and other government agencies could be involved in working out how to link with and support their ECE services. None of the services in the evaluation were integrated ECE centres, offering early childhood education and a range of services for children and families within the same provision. These have been found to meet a wide range of child and family needs, where the ECE provision is of good quality (Bertram & Pascal, 2001). A new approach and fresh look at ECE service planning could provide opportunity for new forms of provision to be developed. Such an approach could also invoke a sense of local commitment to the quality of ECE services in a community, as well as to establishing provision that meets child, parent and whānau needs.

Improve quality of ECE services

Professional development

Many participants said access to appropriate professional development and support was essential for teacher/educators to enable them to keep their knowledge about new developments in teaching and learning up-to-date, and to enhance practice. Some said that services need to make their own professional development priorities, but professional development should also be linked to strategic plan goals. Participants in a rural locality and in playgroups found it difficult to access appropriate professional development/support. In the rural locality, participants had to travel for two or more hours to attend professional development courses since professional development providers did not work within their locality. They wanted professional support offered in their own settings and also expressed interest in locally co-ordinated professional development courses. Playgroup participants said regular ECE related workshops and support from a qualified teacher would be helpful.

It seems that the contestable approach to professional development provision has not ensured equitable access to good quality professional development opportunities for ECE teacher/educators, wherever they are located, and in all service types. This may require analysis of information about access, and direct professional development provision/support where it is needed. In relation to playgroups, the idea of direct professional support is consistent with the suggestion of Mitchell, Royal Tangaere and Mara (2006a) in their research on quality in parent/whānau led services that:

> *The level of support for adult learning for those who needed it could be lifted through a knowledgeable, ECE qualified and experienced professional support person or co-ordinator making regular and frequent visits to work with playgroup parents, participating alongside adults in the education programme (much as experienced adults mentor and provide role models for less experienced adults in playcentres), making suggestions and offering professional development and training (pp. 71–72).*

Time for assessment and planning

We found significant positive correlations between amount of non-contact time and use of Te Whāriki, leadership support, assessment, planning and evaluation, and self review. These processes are factors that can support the focus and quality of learning. We also found patterns of positive relationships between these processes, amount of non-contact time, and higher overall ratings of process quality. The Ministry of Education has acknowledged the importance of these processes in contributing to good quality learning environments by providing resources such as *Kei Tua o te Pae. Assessment for Learning: Early childhood exemplars* (Ministry of Education, 2005), and developing self-review guidelines, as well as focusing Ministry of Education funded professional development on them. Participants in services where there is no or little paid non-contact time said they found it hard to undertake assessment, planning, evaluation and self-review since they had limited or no time for this work. No governmental actions are currently planned to address provision of non-contact time through the strategic plan.

Promote collaborative relationships

Māori and Pacific communities

Many participants said they found it difficult to promote or build collaborative relationships with Māori and Pacific communities (with the exception of kōhanga reo and Pasifika ECE services). They were not confident and did not know how to go about building relationships with these communities. To overcome these difficulties services variously suggested having access to multi-cultural and multi-lingual resources, liaison people or additional staffing from Pacific and other ethnic communities, who could assist them to understand the children's cultures and communicate effectively with children and families. This was particularly so for services with high numbers of Pacific children.

Our evaluation of the initial impact and uses of Equity Funding (Mitchell, Royal Tangaere, Mara, and Wylie, 2006) found similar needs for resources and staffing in services with high numbers of Pacific children and children from other ethnic communities. Many teachers in Pasifika centres were making their own language resources because these were not available. These findings suggest the value of external support, e.g., provision of language and cultural resources, interpretation services, staff professional development, as well as improving the supply of teaching and support staff, especially for these services. The OECD review of early childhood education provision in 12 OECD countries (OECD, 2001) also suggested the need for such support to cater for children from immigrant or ethnic minority backgrounds.

Local collaboration

In general, participants at the community meetings in each of the eight localities endorsed the role that the evaluation had played in bringing people together from early childhood education, schools, local body services such as libraries, and health and welfare organisations within the locality, some saying this was the first time they had met. Participants thought it was useful to come together with people working in local services for children and families because it enabled each party to know more about what services were available and make useful personal contacts. Participants from the diverse types of early childhood education tended to meet within their own service type but thought there would be benefits in getting together on a regular basis with participants from the range of ECE services for discussion of local issues, to form mutually supportive relationships and to contribute to understanding about the different services. Sometimes children attended more than one service, and closer connections could work in the child's interests. These participants felt they were unable to provide co-ordination to enable regular meetings since they had other work priorities. This raises a question about whether external co-ordination to encourage local collaboration would be valuable.

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Appendix 1 – Pathways to the future progress by September 2004

PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE: NGA HUARAHI ARATAKI

OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS FOR ECAC 29 September 2004

Increase Participation	Network management	Design and Build Scheme: The review cycle of current designs will include sector representation and create additional designs to cater for playgroups and non-relocateable facilities, and is expected to commence November 2004.
	Discretionary Grants Scheme (DGS)	National prioritisation meetings for the scheme have been held and recommendations made to the Minister. Analysis is underway to assess the effectiveness of the scheme and individual projects over the past five years.
Improve Quality	Self-review	The draft self review guidelines are in development with the writing group meeting again in October. The draft guidelines will be trialled in February and March 2005 with a diverse range of service types which have registered interest in the project. Interested members of the sector and public will also have the opportunity to provide feedback at hui, fono, and meetings during this time.
	Curriculum support	Selection for the professional development providers for implementation of the exemplars is underway. It is expected that this will be completed in November.
	Centres of Innovation	Selection for the second round of Centres of Innovation is underway. It is expected that a decision would be made either late 2004 or early 2005. Centres in the first round of the programme are undertaking their second cycle of research and a publication is under development, for distribution in the first half of 2005.

8.1.1.1.1.1 Improve Quality	Teacher supply	The Education (Registration of Early Childhood Services Teachers) Regulations 2004 came into effect on 6 September 2004. These regulations confirm the intent of the Strategic Plan from 1 January 2005 'persons responsible' employed in education and care services (including homebased services) must be registered teachers. An extension of time (until Dec. 31, 2007) has been made available to SEACOH, CLE & Chrysalis graduates to upgrade their qualification to the benchmark diploma. The Minister of Education announced a range of initiatives for early childhood education: TeachNZ Scholarships; Loan Support; National and International Relocation Grants; Returning to Teaching Allowances; Relief Teacher Pool; Beginning Teacher Resource; Recruitment Brokers; Incentive Grants; and Primary Study Grants (http://www.beehive.govt.nz/PrintDocument.cfm?DocumentID=21001)
	ECE Professional Development	Request for Proposals for the Professional Development programmes for years 2005 and 2006 advertised in 16 August Gazette with 23 September 2004 closing date. A review of ECE professional development is planned for the first half of 2005. The first national professional development hui for implementation of the Kindergarten Teachers Professional Standards was held in September for Kindergarten managers and senior teachers.
Promote Collaborative Relationships	Collaborative Relationships	The MSD-led work on Early Intervention includes a focus on parenting in the early years and may provide opportunities to further the strategic plan goal of parent support and development from ECE sites.
Supporting Strategies	Funding review	Communications and training plans for the rollout of the new funding system are in development. A new funding handbook is being written and will be tested at service-type specific focus groups around the country from 26 October–4 November 2004.
	Regulatory Review	Over 700 submissions were received and a summary of submissions is being prepared. The Ministry will now report back to Cabinet following consultation on regulatory amendments and process for any further work in October 04
	ICT Strategy	Sector consultation discussion materials and video are with the Minister for approval prior to consultation with the early childhood education sector. Consultation is planned to take place between 11 October and the end of November 2004.

Appendix A:ECE Quality rating scale items

A ADULT: CHILD INTERACTIONS

1   Adults are responsive to children

2   Adults model - and encourage children to use - positive reinforcement, explanation and encouragement as guidance/discipline techniques

3   Adults model/guide children within the context of centre activities

4   Adults ask open-ended questions that encourage children to choose their own answers

5   Adults encourage/ foster children's language development

6   Adults participate with children in activities and play

7   Adults add complexity and challenges for children

B ADULT: INTERACTIONS

8   Adults interact respectfully and positively with each other

9   Adults draw on each other's knowledge of child development

10 Adults work as a team to provide the education programme

C CHILD: ADULT INTERACTIONS

11 Children participate in interactions with adults other than their own parents/   whānau

D CHILD: CHILD INTERACTIONS

12 Children support and co-operate with one another in language and actions

13 Children co-construct learning with other children

14 Children display emergent leadership/leadership skills

E EDUCATION PROGRAMME

15 Children know and can practise kaupapa without direction (for kōhanga only)

16 Tikanga Māori (culture) and/or te reo Māori (language) is evident

17 Non sex-stereotyped play among children is observed

18 There is evidence of recognition/acceptance of the cultures of children at the early childhood service. The ethnicity of the children at the early childhood service is taken into account and their cultures are represented.

19   There is evidence that the setting is inclusive of all children.

20   Children display purposeful involvement in learning episodes

21   Children are encouraged to explore mathematical ideas and symbols

22   Children are allowed to complete activities

23   Children can select their own activities from a variety of learning areas

24   Children work on problems and experiment with solutions

25   Children engage in child-initiated creative play (e.g. storytelling, singing, pretend play, drama, making music)

26   Stories are read/told/shared

27   There is evidence of children's creativity and artwork

28   The centre is a "print-saturated" environment

29   There is evidence of opportunities for children to write

F   RESOURCES

30   There are enough age appropriate toys/books/equipment (resources) to avoid problems of waiting, competing, and fighting for scarce resources

31   Equipment and activities encourage fine motor skills development

32   Equipment and activities encourage gross motor skills development

33   Provision of space for children to explore the physical world

34   A balance of safety and freedom is achieved to ensure access to equipment, materials and learning episodes

35   There is comfortable provision for parents, including parents with babies and toddlers