NZCER
Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa

TE TĀHUHU O TE MĀTAURANGA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

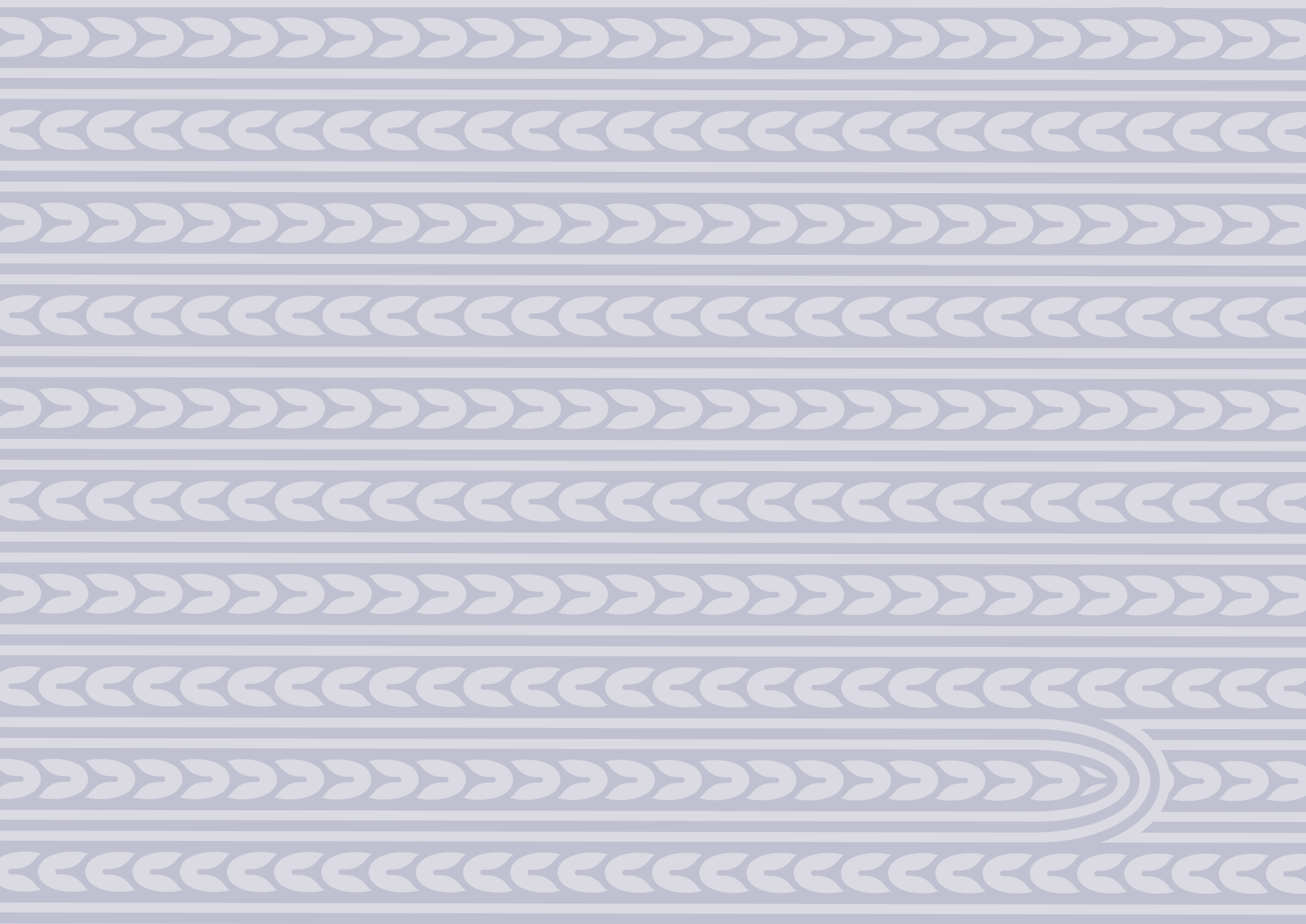# Feedback on the draft Years 0–6 English learning area

August–September 2024

Amanda White, Mengnan Li, Jess Mazengarb, and Rachel Bolstad

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1. Summary

Feedback on the draft English learning area content for Years 0–6 was gathered from 26 August to 20 September 2024, primarily through a Ministry of Education survey. The survey was accessible alongside the draft content on Tāhūrangi and promoted through Ministry of Education channels. The resulting survey sample was self-selected.

Survey responses and submissions

There were 396 responses to the 2024 survey, 82% of which came from respondents in schools. Among the 323 school responses, there were 191 identified schools. The remaining responses came from other interested groups and people, mostly with roles in the education sector. The survey was divided into five sections and included selected response, rating scale, and open-ended questions. In the first section, respondents were asked to provide feedback on the phases 1–2 learning area structure, and planning and teaching guidance. In the second and third sections, respondents were asked if they would like to provide feedback on phase 1 and phase 2 content, respectively. The fourth section of the survey asked for overall feedback on some key aspects of the learning area update. The final section asked about support materials for implementing the updated learning area.

Thirty-four additional submissions, emails, or sets of meeting notes were received or compiled by the Ministry outside of the survey. These were read and included in the analysis of feedback.

Feedback on the phases 1–2 learning area structure, teaching guidance, and planning guidance

Respondents were asked to rate their agreement with two statements about the phases 1–2 learning area structure, and three statements about each of the phases 1–2 teaching guidance and the phases 1–2 planning guidance. Among school respondents, there was majority agreement across all statements, with the highest rate of agreement that "the learning area structure clearly shows how the strands (oral language, reading, and writing) are represented in the learning area" (78% agreement). Overall, responses to the statements about the learning area structure were more positive than those about the teaching guidance, which were, in turn, more positive than those about the planning guidance. The statement with least agreement was "the planning guidance will support effective practice in the classroom" (51% agreement).

Feedback on Understand Know Do (UKD) progress outcomes, year-by-year teaching sequence, and year-by-year teaching methods for each phase

Respondents were given the opportunity to respond in relation to one or both of phases 1 and 2. For each phase, they were asked to rate their agreement with 2–3 statements about the progress outcome, four statements about the year-by-year teaching sequence, and two statements about the year-by-year teaching methods. They were also asked to rate the level of detail and level of difficulty of the teaching sequence for each of the year groups in the phase (the first 6 months, Year 1, Year 2, and Year 3 for phase 1; and, Year 4, Year 5, and Year 6 for phase 2). There were up to 226 responses from schools in relation to phase 1, and up to 166 from schools in relation to phase 2.

There was majority agreement from school respondents, across both phases, with all but three of the 8–9 statements in this section. The highest rate of agreement was with the statement "the UKD progress outcome for phase 2 builds on the learning from phase 1", which was only asked in relation to phase 2. The two statements with least agreement were "the content [of the year-by-year teaching sequence for the phase] will be easy to use", and "the [year-by-year] teaching methods and examples [for the phase] will help teachers design and deliver effective learning". The following table shows the overall proportion of agreement for each of the statements, in relation to each phase.

TABLE 1. **School respondents' agreement with statements about the UKD progress outcomes, teaching sequence, and teaching methods for each phase**

		Percent agreement	
Component	**Statement**	**Phase 1** (n = 226)	**Phase 2** (n = 166)
UKD progress outcome	The UKD progress outcome for phase 2 builds on the learning from phase 1.	NA	72
	The UKD progress outcome for [this phase] clearly communicates what students need to be able to know, understand, and do by the end of [this phase].	65	69
	The UKD progress outcome is clearly displayed in the year-by-year teaching sequence for this phase.	62	62
Year-by-year teaching sequence	The year-by-year breakdown helps teachers to design and deliver effective learning.	60	65
	We can see how we can build on what we are already doing.	71	63
	The language is clear and easy to understand.	60	61
	The content will be easy for teachers to use.	41	46
Year-by-year teaching methods	The teaching methods and examples will help teachers to explicitly teach the year-by-year sequence.	50	49
	The teaching methods and examples will help teachers design and deliver effective learning.	46	45

Across all year groups within both phases, a majority of school respondents thought the level of detail in the teaching sequence was about right (54%–56% for phase 1 and 64%–66% for phase 2). School respondents were more likely to think the level of detail was too much than too little for both phases.

The proportion of school respondents who indicated that the level of difficulty in the phase 1 teaching sequence was about right increased with year group, from 44% in the first 6 months, to 64% in Year 6. Few respondents saw the difficulty as too easy for any of the year groups. Forty-nine percent of respondents thought the teaching sequence was too difficult in the first 6 months, including 23% who thought it was much too difficult.

Overall feedback on the learning area

There was more agreement than disagreement, overall, from school respondents in relation to six of the eight statements about the draft content in this section. The highest rates of agreement were with the statements "it is knowledge rich" (69%) and "it is organised logically" (67%), while the least agreement was with the statement "it is inclusive of all students" (19% agreement and 57% disagreement, about half of that strong). The majority of school respondents (56%) chose to neither agree nor disagree that "it is internationally comparable".

Feedback on support and resources

Respondents were asked how much support they felt they would need across different components of the learning area. Looking together at school and other respondents, the areas most indicated as needing "a lot of support" were the teaching sequence (33%), teaching methods (34%), and the teaching guidance (34%).

Positive feedback about the learning area

Among things that some people specifically said they liked were the explicit focus on oral language, the year-level breakdown, the level of detail, the structured literacy approach, the science of learning, and the "do" elements. Some respondents indicated that they felt phase 2 was better than phase 1. However, positive comments were often tempered with additional feedback suggesting improvements or expressing concerns, and the things that some respondents liked were often critiqued by others.

Areas for improvement and key concerns expressed

There were hundreds of critical and improvement-focused comments across the survey responses and submissions. Overall themes that recurred at high frequency across multiple parts of the survey and submissions related to the following:
- presentation and ease of use of the document
- ensuring that the curriculum content is inclusive and achievable for all learners, with particular concerns with respect to phase 1 and in the first 6–12 months
- concerns about amount and prioritisation of content, particularly at phase 1
- aspects of content felt to be missing, misrepresented, or given too much/little emphasis
- adequacy of guidance, examples, and support for their teaching practice, including for differentiation and assessment
- whether the draft adequately reflects the Aotearoa New Zealand context
- questions about the research and evidence base underpinning the content, concern around the fusion of approaches, and the notion of international comparability.

Feedback on the phases 1–2 teaching and planning guidance

Analysis of responses to the open question about what else respondents would expect to see in the teaching and planning guidance sections revealed similar themes for both. Themes in the feedback related to four main areas of improvement: presentation, language, and ease of use; content priorities; support for all learners; and teacher support, guidance, and recognition.

Feedback on phase 1 and phase 2 year-by-year teaching sequences

Key themes in the feedback included the need for realistic learner expectations, supporting diverse learning/language needs, incorporating te reo Māori, being culturally responsive, addressing content priorities, clarifying scope and sequence, supporting teacher knowledge/autonomy, and teacher support, guidance, and time.

Resources and support

Asked about what resources would help with implementing the learning area, respondents identified specific existing resources and support that they wanted to be further provided, improved, and updated. Many referenced different Ministry of Education resources, with the Better Start Literacy Approach (BSLA) mentioned most frequently. There was also feedback about the resources and support schools would like to see to support their planning, teaching, assessment, and reporting.

2. Introduction and methods

This report summarises feedback on the draft English learning area content for Years 0–6, released in August 2024. Feedback was gathered from 26 August to 20 September 2024.[1]

A Ministry of Education online survey was the main method for collecting feedback. The survey was accessible alongside the draft content on the Ministry of Education website, Tāhūrangi, and was promoted through Ministry of Education channels. The resulting survey sample was self-selected. To facilitate professional discussion, school-based respondents were encouraged to complete the survey in groups, but respondents could choose to answer the survey individually. The survey was primarily aimed at schools, but other people and groups could also respond to the survey. Additional feedback was received by the Ministry of Education by email and sent to NZCER to include in this analysis.

Survey structure

Respondents answered an introductory set of demographic questions. The remaining content of the survey was divided into five sections and included selected response, rating scale, and open-ended questions. In the first section, respondents were asked to provide feedback on the phases 1–2 learning area structure, teaching guidance, and planning guidance. In the second and third sections, respondents were asked if they would like to provide feedback on phase 1 and phase 2 content, respectively. Respondents could complete or skip each of these sections. The fourth section of the survey asked for overall feedback on some key aspects of the learning area update. The final optional section asked about support materials for implementing the refreshed learning area.

In calculating percentages for survey sections 2, 3, and 5, respondents were excluded from the "eligible" total if they chose to skip that section. The number of eligible respondents for each section is indicated in this report. Some respondents exited the survey before reaching the end. Partial responses are included in the data.

How to read tables and graphs

Where appropriate, tables show both the counts and percentages of responses. For questions where respondents were asked to select one response from a set of options, the percentages given are calculated using the total number of responses for that question. For questions where respondents were asked to select as many options as applicable from a set, percentages are calculated using the total number of eligible survey respondents. Note that percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Where an "n" is provided in a plot heading, this number indicates the total number of responses to the corresponding block of questions. The numbers shown on the plot itself are percentages, calculated as above. In most cases, the "n" is consistent across a block of questions, as respondents

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1   This was the second time the learning area was revised and shared for sector feedback. A previous version of the learning area was shared with the sector for feedback in September 2022, and a summary report from that cycle of feedback was prepared for the Ministry of Education (see McDowall, S., White, A., Li, M., and Mazengarb, J. (2023). Feedback on the draft English learning area: *Feedback on components of The New Zealand Curriculum Refresh*. Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa | New Zealand Council for Educational Research).

could not move on to the next page without answering all the selected response and rating scale questions. However, in some cases, response numbers vary across questions within a single plot where respondents skipped items. In these cases, the "n" is provided as a range.

Survey responses

There were 396 responses to the survey. Respondents were asked to answer an introductory set of demographic questions. The first question asked if respondents were from a school, another education organisation, or "other". Table 2 shows the profile of respondents. Most (82%) were from a school.

TABLE 2. **Respondents by category**

Number of respondents	Count	Percentage
From a school	323	82
From another education organisation	43	11
Other	30	8

For the purposes of analysis and reporting, responses to the rest of the questions in the survey have been split into two categories—those from schools, and those not from schools. Respondents who identified as responding "from another education organisation" and "other" are referred to collectively as non-school or other in the remainder of this report. Further details about the roles of respondents in each grouping are provided below.

School survey respondents

Of the 323 school responses, 306 could be matched to a school name or school ID, resulting in 191 unique school IDs. The demographic characteristics of the schools that responded to the survey are described in Appendices A and B.

Most identified schools returned one survey. There were 39 school IDs from which two or more responses were received. In most cases, we could identify two or three responses from these schools. Just 10 schools returned four or more responses (with two schools returning 15 and 17 responses each). Sixty-three percent of school responses were from individuals.

The roles held by school respondents are shown in Table 3. Respondents could select more than one role. The most frequently identified role was fully registered teacher (65% of respondents).

TABLE 3. **Roles held by school respondents**

Number of respondents	Count	Percentage
Principal	66	20
Deputy/Assistant/Associate principal	101	31
Team/Syndicate leader	115	36
Specialist teacher	42	13
Fully registered teacher	209	65
Provisionally registered teacher	42	13
None of the above	3	1

Non-school responses

Of the 73 responses that were not from a school, 61 were from individuals, and 13 were from groups. Non-school respondents were asked to select a single descriptor for their role or group and were identified as follows: facilitator/professional development provider (22 responses); academic/ tertiary providers (13 responses, including some from initial teacher education); members of the public (four responses); research (one response); and "other" (32 responses). The respondents who selected "other" included 16 teachers and one kāhui ako group (teachers included retired teachers, English and ESOL specialists, and teachers with additional roles). Five were RTLB or RTLit, three were resource developers, two were subject associations, education union, and one parent.

Generalisability of the survey data

As the survey sample is self-selected, the results cannot be considered generalisable to the wider population. The analysis is descriptive and reflects the views of those who chose to respond to the survey. Observations, including comparisons, made in this report should not be assumed to reflect patterns and relationships beyond the self-selected sample.

Submissions and emails

The Ministry of Education passed on 34 additional submissions, emails, or meeting notes that were received or compiled by the Ministry outside of the survey. Submissions received were from four school teaching teams, 10 individual teachers (including those who identified as being teachers with deputy principal, principal, and RTLB roles), one union, two kāhui ako, one subject association, one disability advisory group, four literacy consultants/providers, six academic groups or individuals, four members of the public, and one curriculum leads group.

Analysis of comments and submissions

Survey comments were coded and analysed thematically using NVivo. Submissions were read and summarised to identify the extent and nature of feedback. Some submissions provided extensive and detailed feedback on multiple parts of the draft learning area content. Detailed submissions were identified to the Ministry of Education so that these could be read in full. In this report, we provide an overview of the most common themes that emerged across survey comments and submissions. Quotes have been selected to provide a general sense of the ideas expressed. We have selected examples from a range of different respondents.

For simplicity, this report tends to use the term "respondents" when providing overall commentary about the data set. Where quotes are directly provided in the text, we have identified whether the response was from a school respondent or other respondent.

3. Feedback on phases 1–2 learning area structure, teaching guidance, and planning guidance

Phases 1–2 learning area structure

Respondents were asked to respond to two rating scale questions about the phases 1–2 learning area structure. Figure 1 shows responses from schools (n = 323), and Figure 2 shows responses from other people and groups who responded to the survey (n = 73).[2]

School responses

A large majority of school respondents agreed with each of the statements, with a slightly higher rate of agreement that "the learning area structure clearly shows how the strands (oral language, reading, and writing) are represented in the English learning area" (78% agreement, compared with 67%). A greater percentage neither agreed nor disagreed with these statements, than disagreed.

Other groups' responses

Among other respondents, about half agreed with each statement. The rates of disagreement with each statement were higher for this group (around a third in each case, with roughly half of those being strongly disagree).

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2   The composition of the non-school/other group is described in the previous section.

FIGURE 1.   **Phases 1–2 learning area structure, school responses (n = 323)**
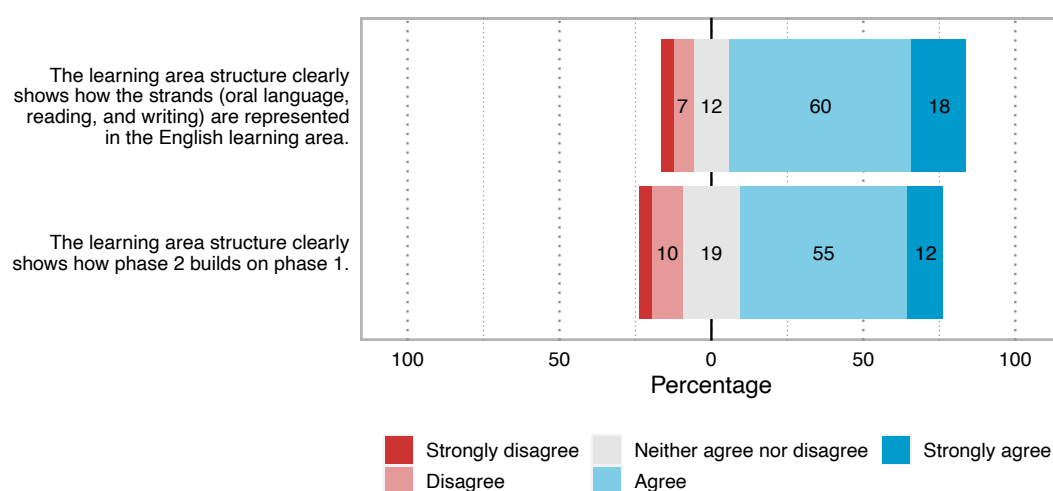
FIGURE 2. **Phases 1–2 learning area structure, other responses (n = 73)**
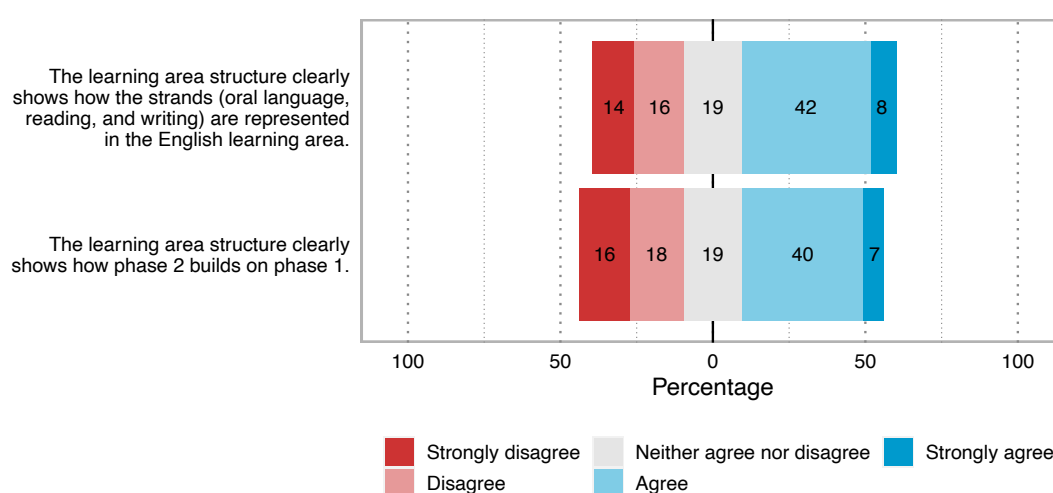
Teaching guidance

The teaching guidance section included five subsections: *The science of learning in practice; Explicit teaching; Elements of structured literacy approaches; Positive relationships with oral language, reading, and writing;* and *Working with texts is at the core of English.* Respondents were asked to respond to three rating scale questions and one open question about the teaching guidance. Figure 3 shows responses from schools (n = 323), and Figure 4 shows responses from other people and groups who responded to the survey (n = 73).

In response to the open question "What is not present in the teaching guidance that you would expect to see?", there were 199 school responses and 49 responses from respondents who were not

from a school. Themes from respondent comments are discussed in Section 8.

School responses

Rates of agreement were similar across the three statements about the teaching guidance. The statement with the least agreement was that "the teaching guidance will support effective practice in the classroom". However, there was still majority agreement with this statement (59%). There was slightly less disagreement with "we can see how we can build on what we are already doing" (16%, compared with 21%–22%).

Other groups' responses

Across the three statements, other respondents least frequently agreed that the teaching guidance will support effective practice, with only 32% of this group indicating agreement, and 44% indicating disagreement. Overall, rates of agreement with the statements were lower for this group than for school respondents, and rates of disagreement (particularly strong disagreement) were higher.

FIGURE 3.   **Phases 1–2 teaching guidance, school responses (n = 323)**
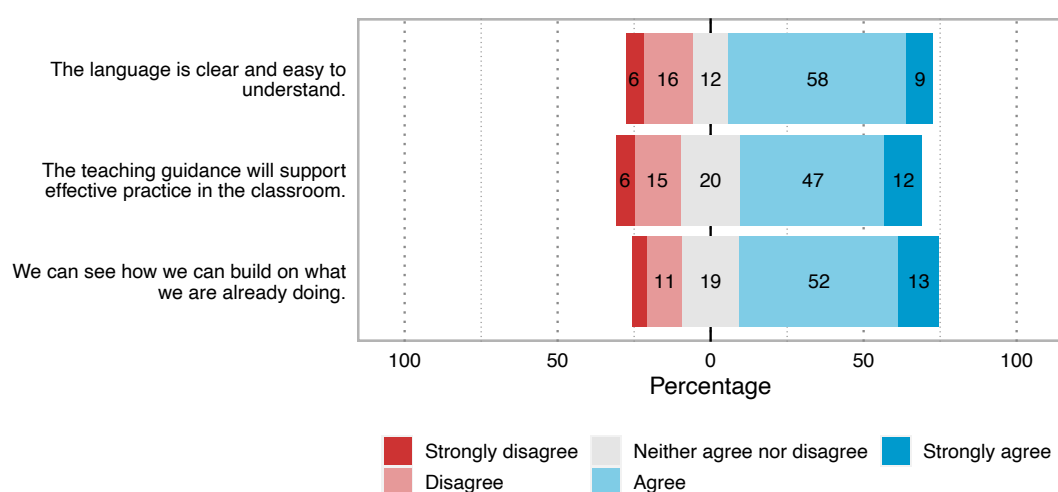
FIGURE 4.   **Phases 1–2 teaching guidance, other responses (n = 73)**
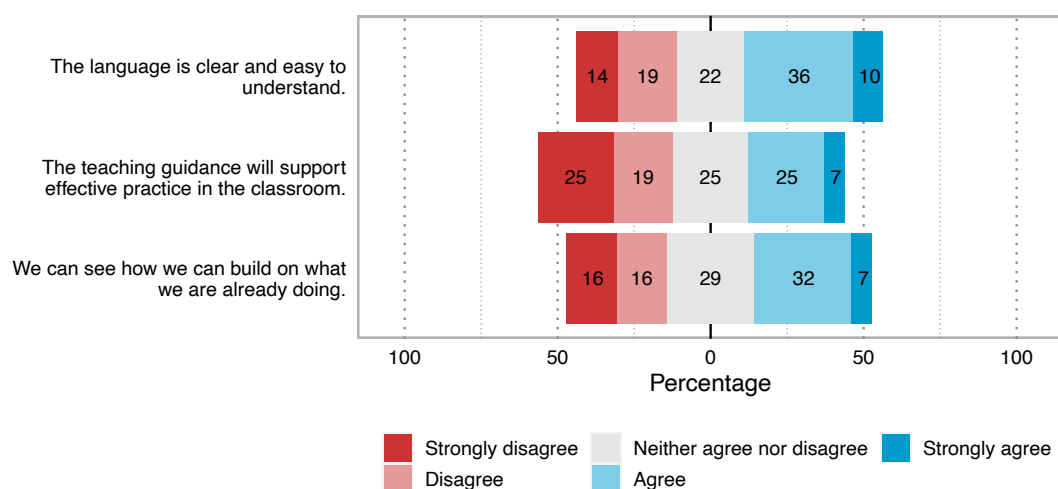
Planning guidance

The planning guidance section contained four subsections: *Planning for an hour a day; Planning for variability in learning; Planning for assessment;* and *Planning for effective grouping practices.* Respondents were asked to respond to equivalent rating scale and open questions in relation to the planning guidance. Figures 5 and 6 show responses to the rating scale questions from schools (n = 323), and other people and groups (n = 73), respectively.

In response to the open question "What is not present in the planning guidance that you would expect to see?", there were 162 school responses and 49 responses from respondents who were not from a school. Themes from respondent comments are discussed in Section 8.

School responses

The pattern of school responses to the statements about planning guidance largely mirrored the pattern of responses to the parallel statements about teaching guidance (lowest rate of agreement that "the planning guidance will support effective practice in the classroom"—51%, and lowest rate of disagreement that "we can see how we can build on what we are already doing—18%). There appears to be slightly less agreement with the statements, overall, for planning guidance than for teaching guidance. However, there was still majority agreement across all three statements.

Other groups' responses

The pattern of agreement for other respondents was also similar to that observed in relation to the teaching guidance, with least agreement (27%) that the planning guidance will support effective practice. None of the three statements show majority agreement among other respondents.

FIGURE 5. **Phases 1–2 planning guidance, school responses (n = 323)**
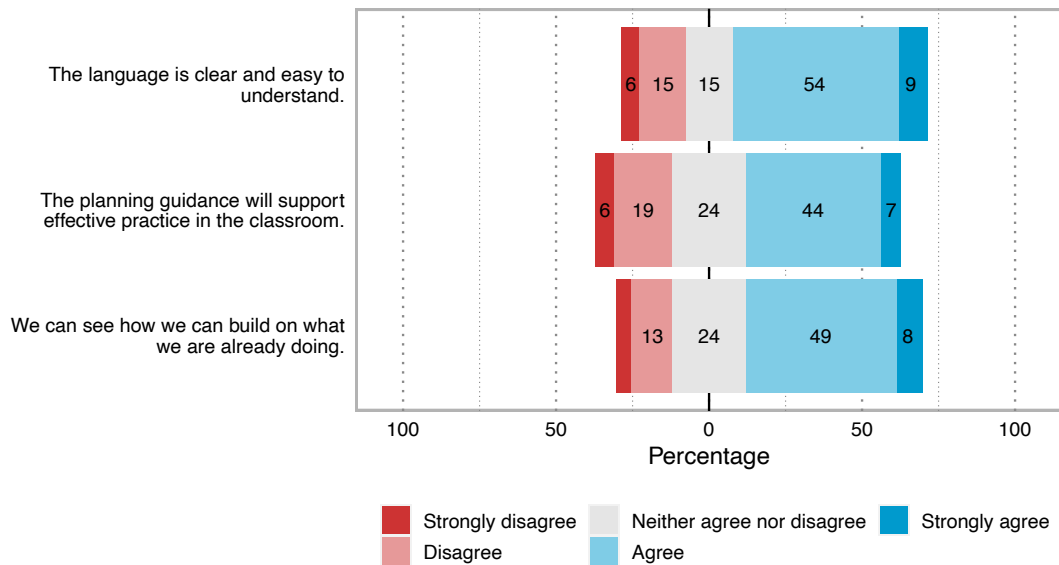
FIGURE 6. **Phases 1–2 planning guidance, other responses (n = 73)**
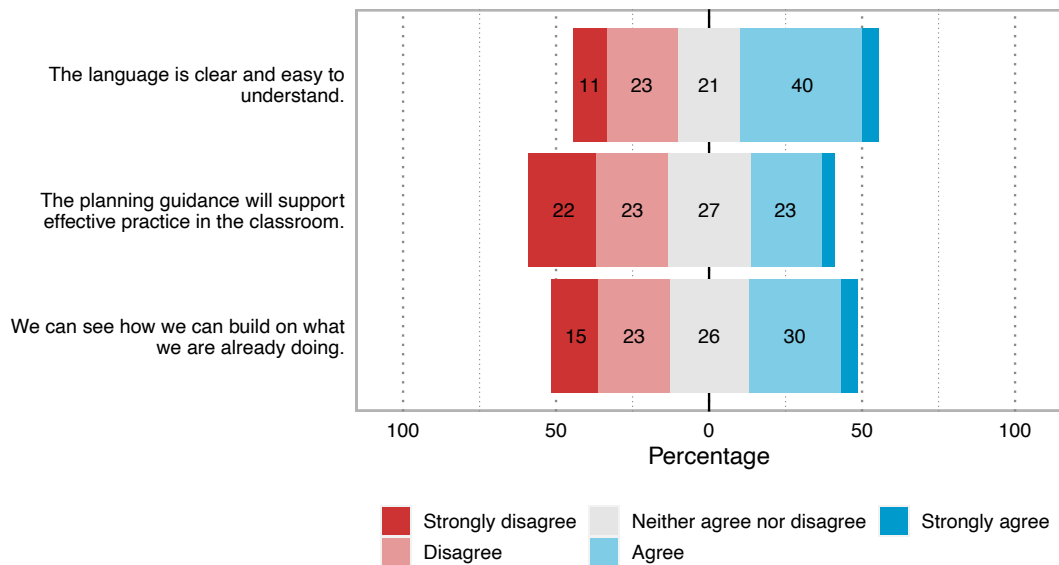
4. Feedback on phase 1

Respondents could choose whether to give more specific feedback on each of the three phases. Of the school respondents, 238 indicated they wanted to give feedback on phase 1. However, the number of school responses to the questions in this section ranged from 217 to 226. Of the other respondents, 60 indicated they wanted to give feedback on phase 1 and the number of responses ranged between 49 and 53.

Respondents were asked if they or anyone in their group taught learners at this phase. Eighty-eight percent of 226 school respondents and 53% of 53 other respondents selected yes.

Phase 1 progress outcome

Figures 7 and 8 show respondents' level of agreement with two statements about the UKD progress outcome for phase 1. Figure 7 shows responses from schools (n = 226), and Figure 8 shows responses from other people and groups who responded to the survey (n = 73).

School responses

Around two-thirds of school respondents agreed with each of the statements about the UKD progress outcome for phase 1, with a slightly greater rate of disagreement that "the UKD outcome is clearly displayed together in the year-by-year teaching sequence for this phase" (22%, compared with 14%).

Other responses

There was more disagreement than agreement with each of the statements about the UKD progress outcomes for phase 1 among the other respondents to the survey (44%–45% disagreement, compared with 33%–34% agreement).

FIGURE 7. **Phase 1 progress outcome, school responses (n = 226)**
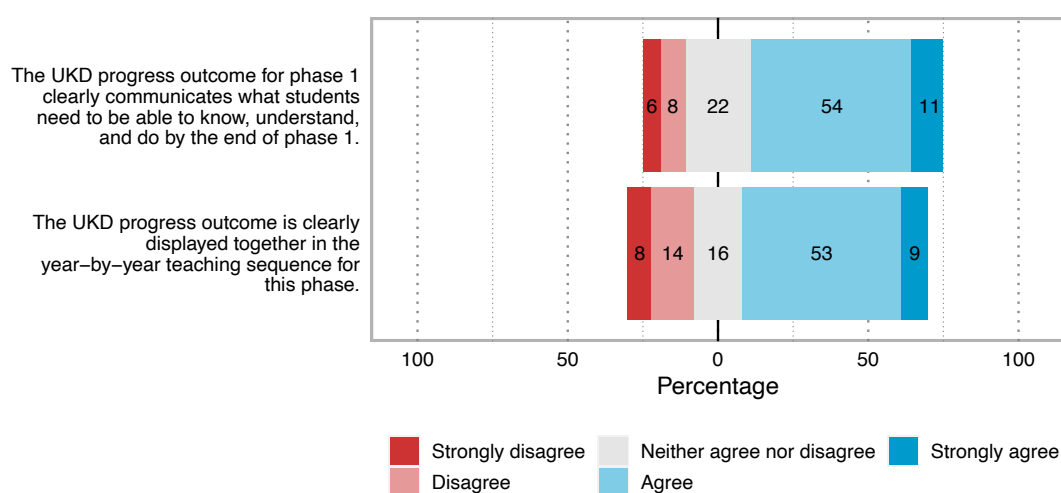
FIGURE 8. **Phase 1 progress outcome, other responses (n = 53)**
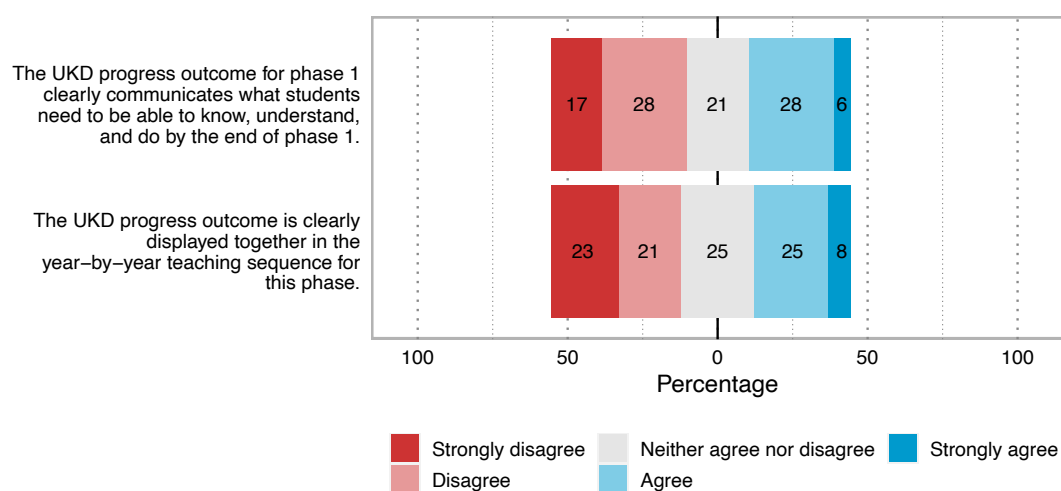
Phase 1 year-by-year teaching sequence

Figures 9 and 10 show respondents' level of agreement with four statements about the year-by-year teaching sequence for phase 1. Figure 9 shows responses from schools (n = 226), and Figure 10 shows responses from other people and groups (n = 53).

School responses

There was majority agreement from school respondents with three of the four statements about the year-by-year teaching sequence (60%–71% agreement). The statement with the highest rate of

agreement was "we can see how we can build on what we are already doing". Only 41% of school respondents agreed that "the content will be easy for teachers to use", while 37% disagreed with this statement.

Other responses

Among other respondents, rates of agreement were also lowest for the statement "the content will be easy for teachers to use". In this case, only 11% agreed (with no strong agreement reported), and 62% disagreed (36% strongly). Overall, other respondents more frequently reported disagreement than agreement for each of these statements.

FIGURE 9. **Phase 1 year-by-year teaching sequence, school responses (n = 226)**
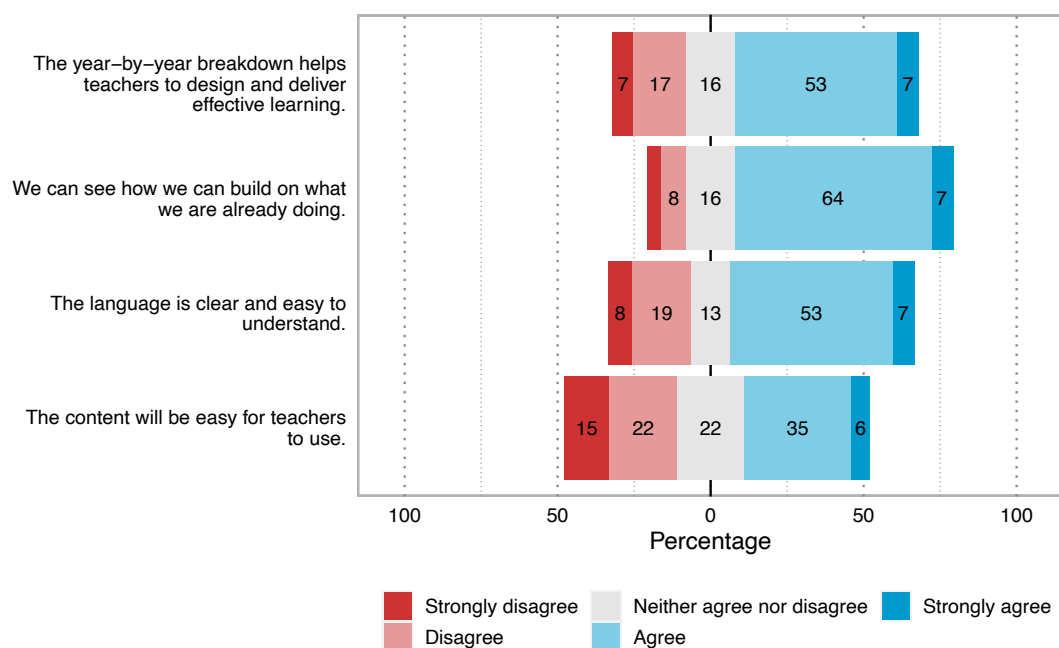
FIGURE 10. **Phase 1 year-by-year teaching sequence, other responses (n = 53)**
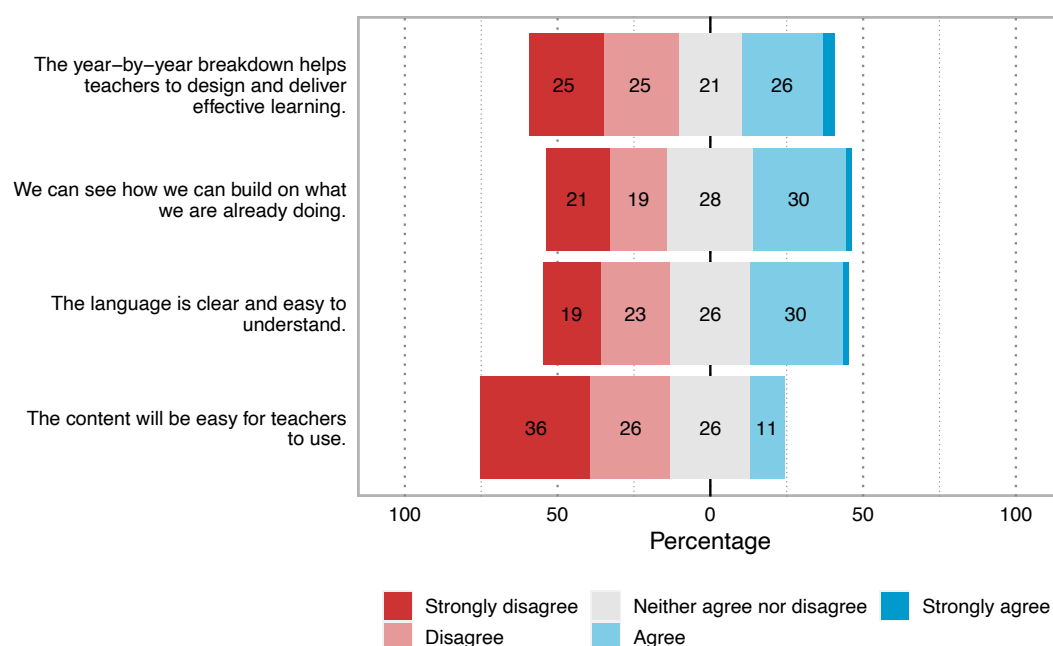
Phase 1 level of detail

Respondents were asked to rate the level of detail in the year-by-year teaching sequence, for the first 6 months and at each of Years 1–3. Figure 11 shows responses from schools, which ranged in number from 217 to 220 across the year groups, and Figure 12 shows responses from other people and groups, for whom there were a consistent 50 responses across year groups.

School responses

Across all the year groups, the majority of school respondents felt that the level of detail in the phase 1 teaching sequence was about right. For each year group, around 15% thought there was not enough detail and around 25% thought there was too much detail.

Other responses

For each year group, the largest proportion of respondents indicated there was too much detail (46% in each case). Between 22% and 24% felt there was not enough detail, and 26%–28% said the detail was about right.

FIGURE 11. **Level of detail in the phase 1 teaching sequence, school responses (n = 217–220)**
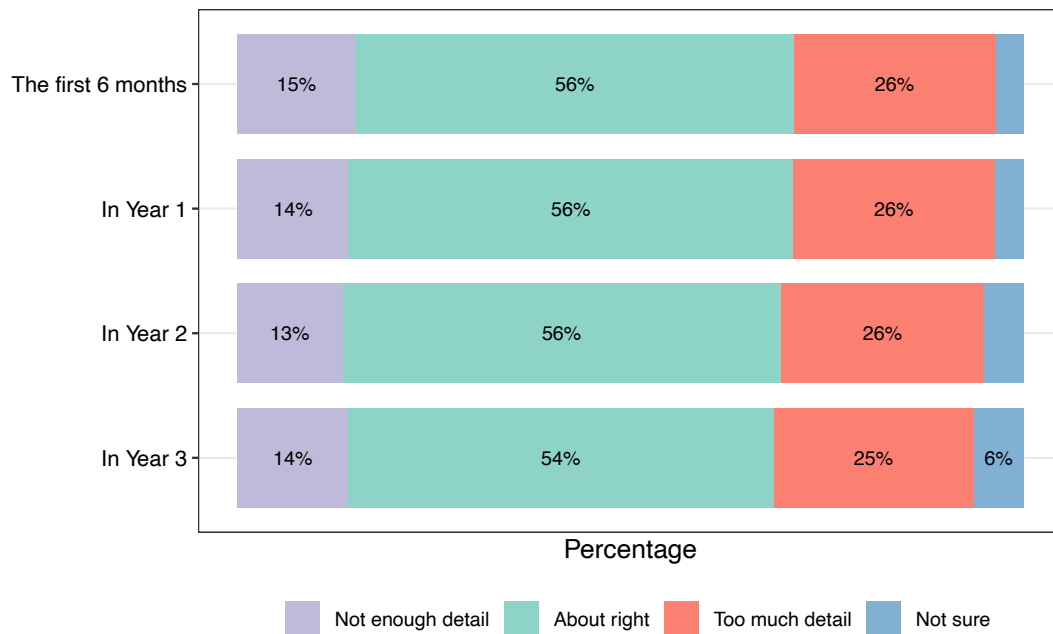
FIGURE 12. **Level of detail in the phase 1 teaching sequence, other responses (n = 50)**
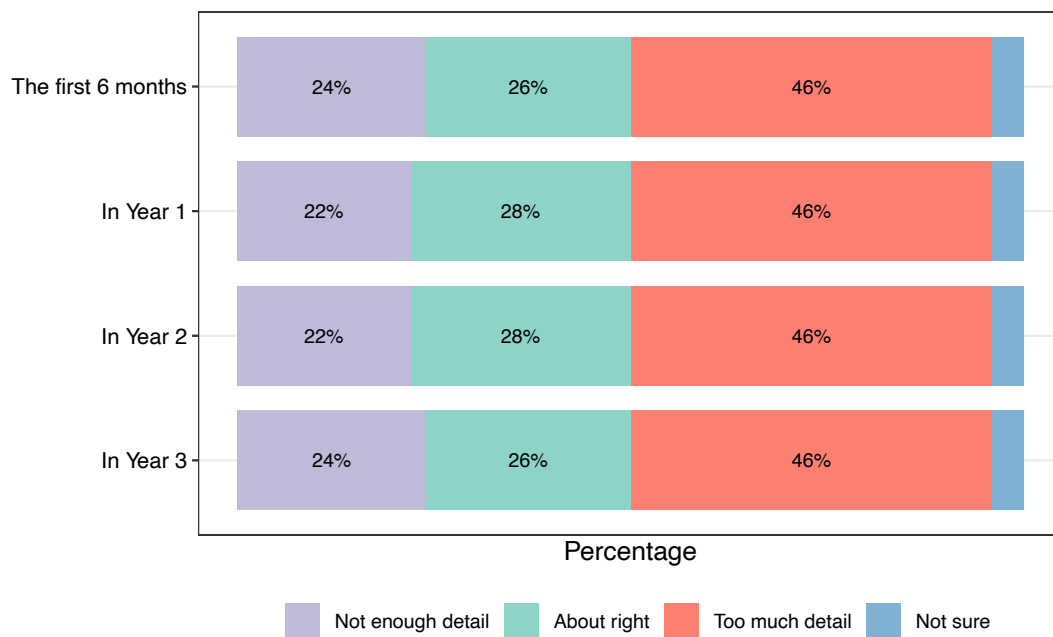
Phase 1 level of difficulty

Respondents were asked to rate the level of difficulty in the year-by-year teaching sequence, for the first 6 months and at each of Years 1–3. Figure 13 shows responses from schools, which ranged in number from 220 to 223 across the year levels, and Figure 14 shows responses from other people and groups, which ranged in number from 49 to 50.

School responses

The proportion of school respondents who indicated that the level of difficulty in the phase 1 teaching sequence was about right increased with year group, from 44% in the first 6 months, to 54% in Year 3. Very few respondents saw the difficulty as too easy for any of the year groups. Forty-nine percent of respondents thought the teaching sequence was too difficult in the first 6 months, including 23% who thought it was much too difficult.

Other responses

A larger proportion of other respondents were not sure about the level of difficulty of the phase 1 teaching sequence (from 20%–24% compared with 5%–9% of school respondents). Across the first two year groups, a greater proportion of other respondents felt the teaching sequence was too difficult, than thought it was about right (in the first 6 months, 36% indicated it was too difficult and 28% about right; in Year 1, 38% thought it was too difficult and 29% about right). Other respondents were less likely than school respondents to think the teaching sequence was too difficult in Years 2 and 3, and more likely to think it was too easy for those year groups.

FIGURE 13. **Level of difficulty in the phase 1 teaching sequence, school responses (n = 220–223)**
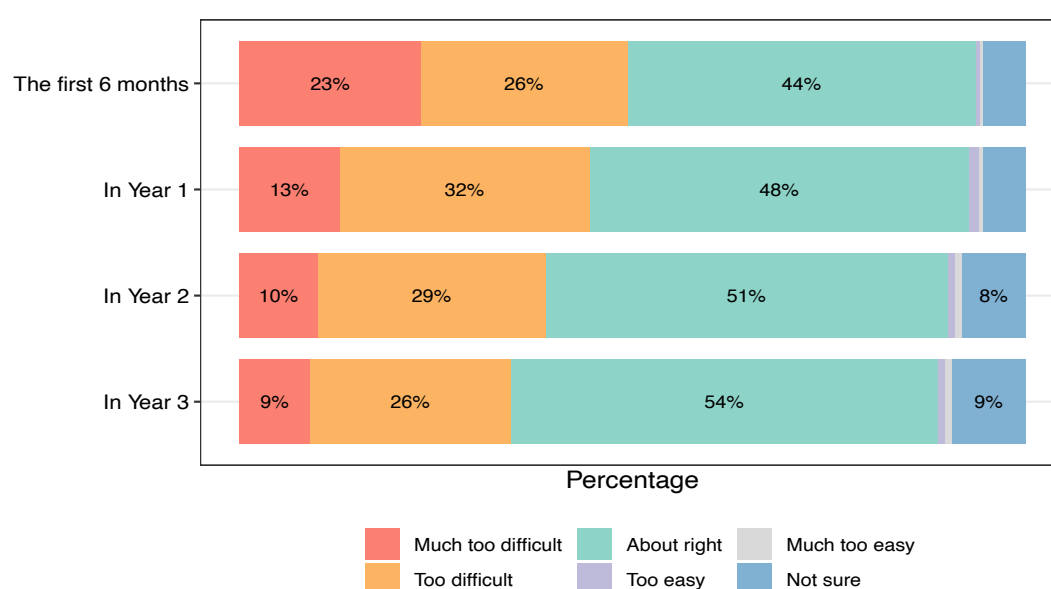
FIGURE 14. **Level of difficulty in the phase 1 teaching sequence, other responses (n = 49–50)**
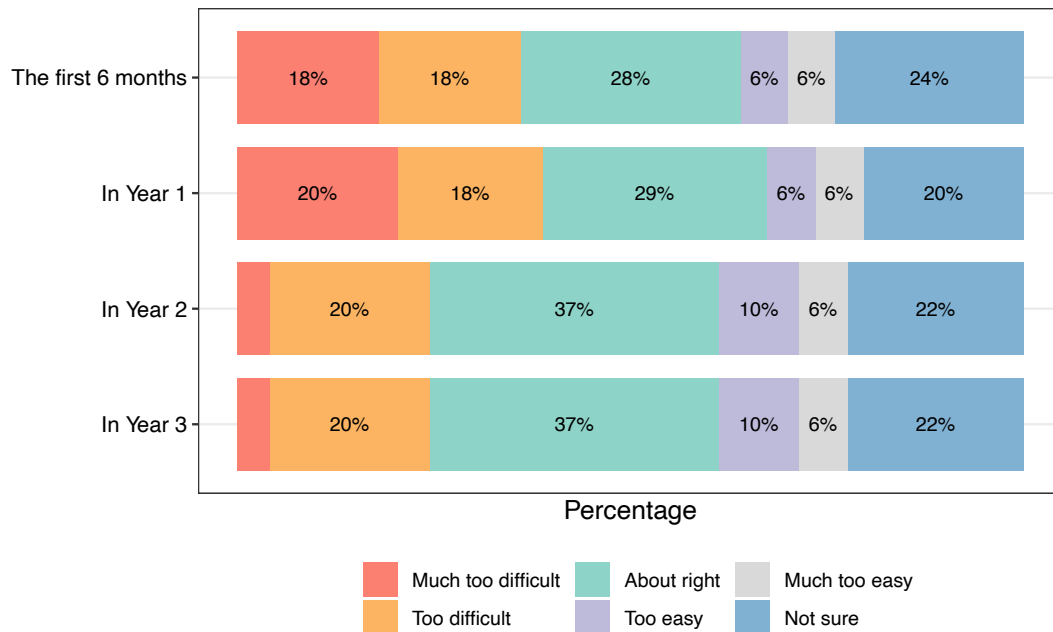
Phase 1 teaching methods

Figures 15 and 16 show respondents' level of agreement with two statements about the year-by-year teaching methods for phase 1. Figure 15 shows responses from schools (n = 223), and Figure 16 shows responses from other people and groups (n = 53).

School responses

Around half of school respondents agreed with each of the statements about the year-by-year teaching methods for phase 1, and around one-third disagreed in each case. A slightly higher proportion agreed that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers to explicitly teach the year-by-year sequence" than agreed that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers design and deliver effective learning" (50%, compared with 46%).

Other responses

Other respondents were more likely to disagree with each of the statements than they were to agree, with 49% disagreeing that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers to explicitly teach the year-by-year sequence" and 56% disagreeing that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers design and deliver effective learning".

Open comments

In response to an open question "Is there anything else you would like to see within the teaching sequence that will support learners to be successful in learning?" (for phase 1), there were 165 comments from schools and 44 comments from other respondents. Themes from open comments are discussed in Section 8.

FIGURE 15. **Phase 1 teaching methods, school responses (n = 223)**
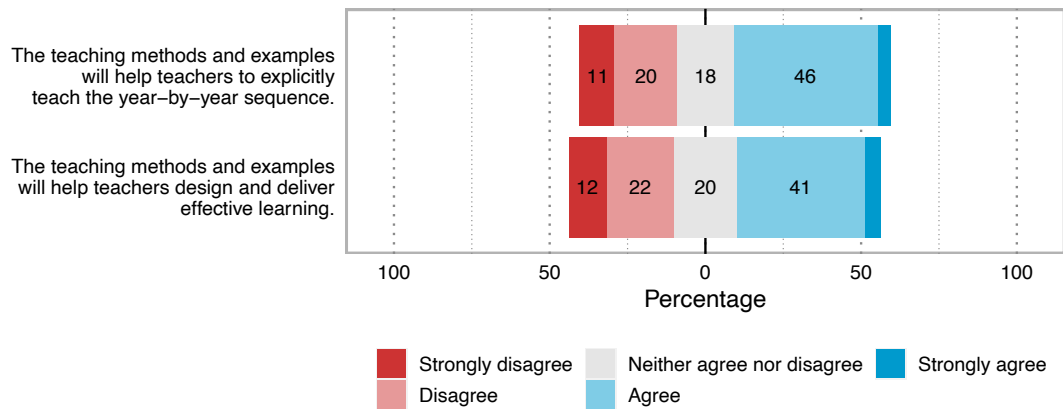
FIGURE 16. **Phase 1 teaching methods, other responses (n = 53)**
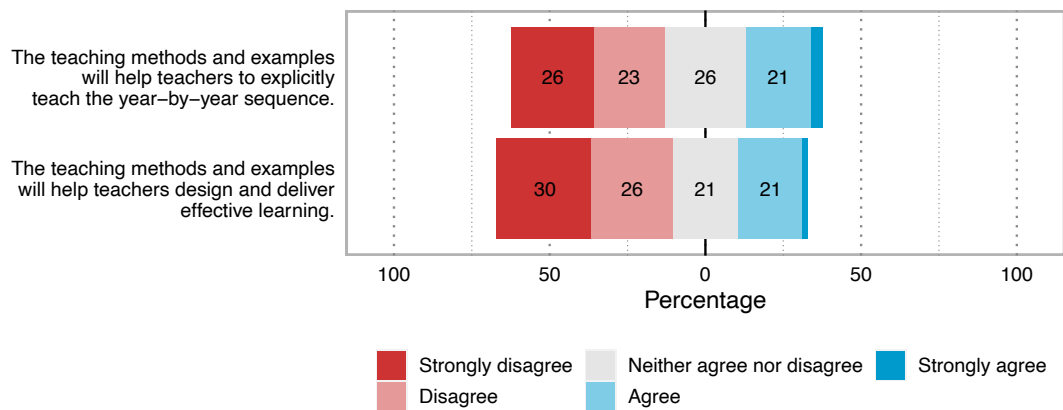
5. Feedback on phase 2

Of the school respondents, 169 indicated they wanted to give feedback on phase 2. The number of school responses to the questions in this section ranged from 159 to 166. Of the other respondents, 36 indicated they wanted to give feedback on phase 2 and the number of responses ranged between 31 and 36.

Respondents were asked if they or anyone in their group taught learners at this phase. Eighty-six percent of 166 school respondents and 50% of 36 other respondents selected yes.

Phase 2 progress outcome

Figures 15 and 16 show respondents' level of agreement with statements about the UKD progress outcome for phase 2. Figure 15 shows responses from schools (n=166) and Figure 16 shows responses from other people and groups (n=36)

School responses

The majority of school respondents agreed with each of the three statements about the UKD progress outcome for phase 2. The highest rate of agreement was with the statement "the UKD progress outcome for phase 2 builds on the learning from phase 1" (72%), and the lowest rate of agreement with the statement "the UKD progress outcome is clearly displayed in the year-by-year teaching sequence for this phase" (62%).

Other responses

The majority of other respondents (53%) agreed that "the UKD progress outcome for phase 2 builds on the learning from phase 1". Smaller proportions of respondents agreed with the other 2 statements, with rates of agreement and disagreement being similar (between 34% and 39% in each case). A larger proportion of other respondents than school respondents selected neither agree nor disagree in response to these statements.

FIGURE 17. **Phase 2 progress outcome, school responses (n = 166)**
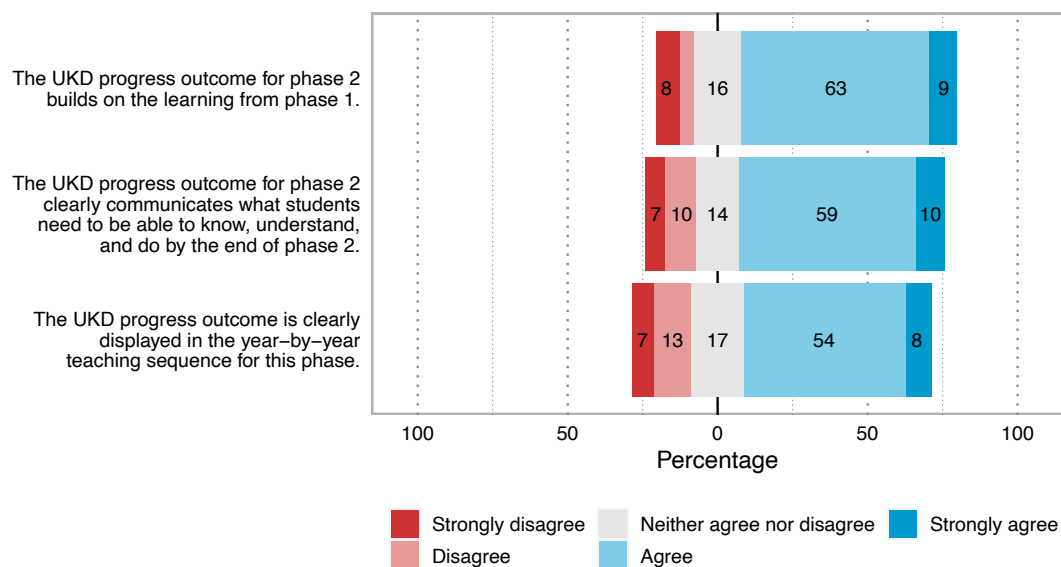
FIGURE 18. **Phase 2 progress outcome, other responses (n = 36)**
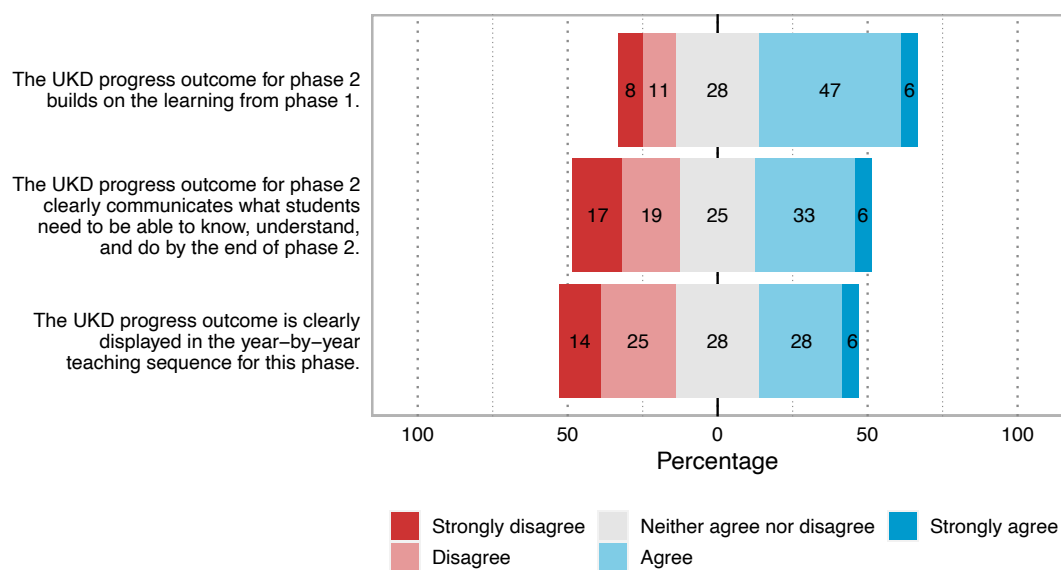
Phase 2 year-by-year teaching sequence

Figures 19 and 20 show respondents' level of agreement with four statements about the year-by-year teaching sequence for phase 2. Figure 19 shows responses from schools (n = 166) and Figure 20 shows responses from other people and groups (n = 36).

School responses

There was majority agreement from school respondents with three of the four statements about the year-by-year teaching sequence (61%–65% agreement). Only 46% of school respondents agreed that "the content will be easy for teachers to use", while 32% disagreed with this statement. The lowest rate of disagreement was with "we can see how we can build on what we are already doing" (16%).

Other responses

Among other respondents, rates of agreement were also lowest for the statement "the content will be easy for teachers to use". Nineteen percent agreed with this statement (with no strong agreement reported), and 47% disagreed. Overall, other respondents more frequently reported disagreement than agreement for each of these statements. About a third of other respondents selected neither agree nor disagree in response to the statements "the content will be easy for teachers to use" and "we can see how we can build on what we are already doing", which was also more than agreed in each case.

FIGURE 19. **Phase 2 year-by-year teaching sequence, school responses (n = 166)**
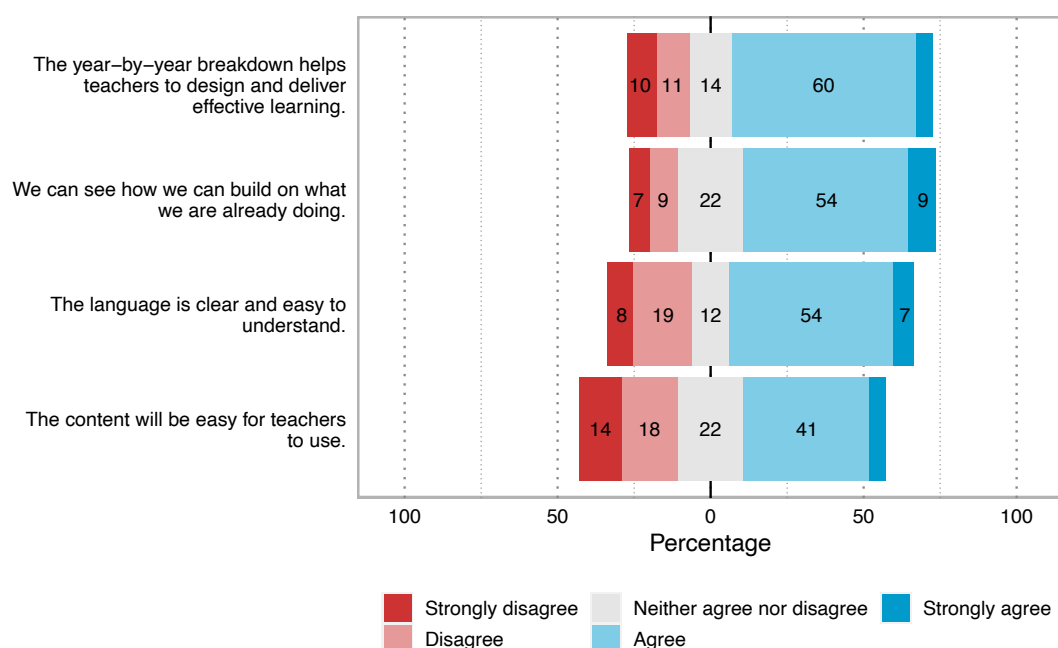
FIGURE 20. **Phase 2 year-by-year teaching sequence, other responses (n=36)**
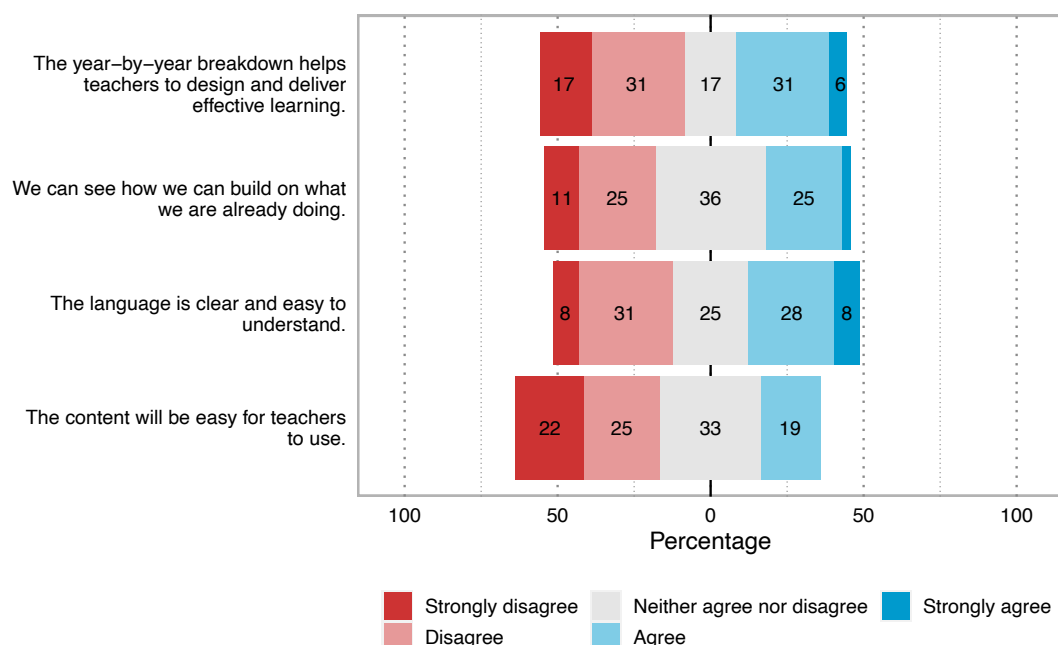
Phase 2 level of detail

Respondents were asked to rate the level of detail in the year-by-year teaching sequence, for each of Years 4–6. Figure 21 shows responses from schools, which ranged in number from 159 to 162 across the year levels, and Figure 22 shows responses from other people and groups, which ranged in number from 33 to 34.

School responses

About two-thirds of school respondents thought the level of detail in the phase 2 teaching sequence was about right in each of Years 4–6. Eleven percent to 13% thought there was not enough detail, and 18%–21% thought there was too much detail.

Other responses

For each of Years 4–6, the largest proportion of other respondents felt the level of detail in the phase 2 teaching sequence was too much (41%–45%). Other respondents were also more likely than school respondents to think there was not enough detail.

FIGURE 21. **Level of detail in the phase 2 teaching sequence, school responses (n = 159–162)**
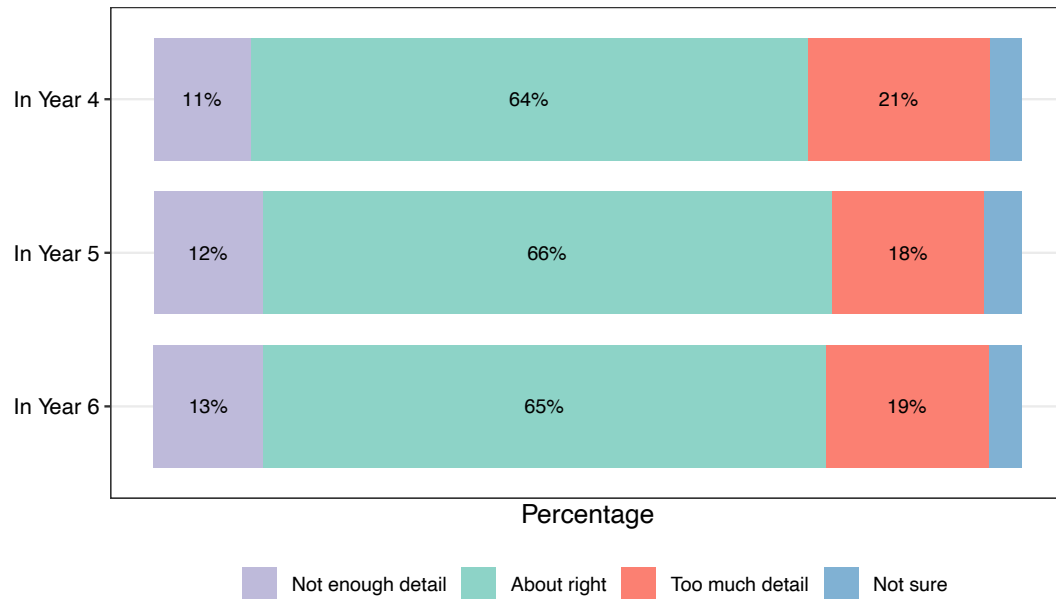
FIGURE 22. **Level of detail in the phase 2 teaching sequence, other responses (n = 33–34)**
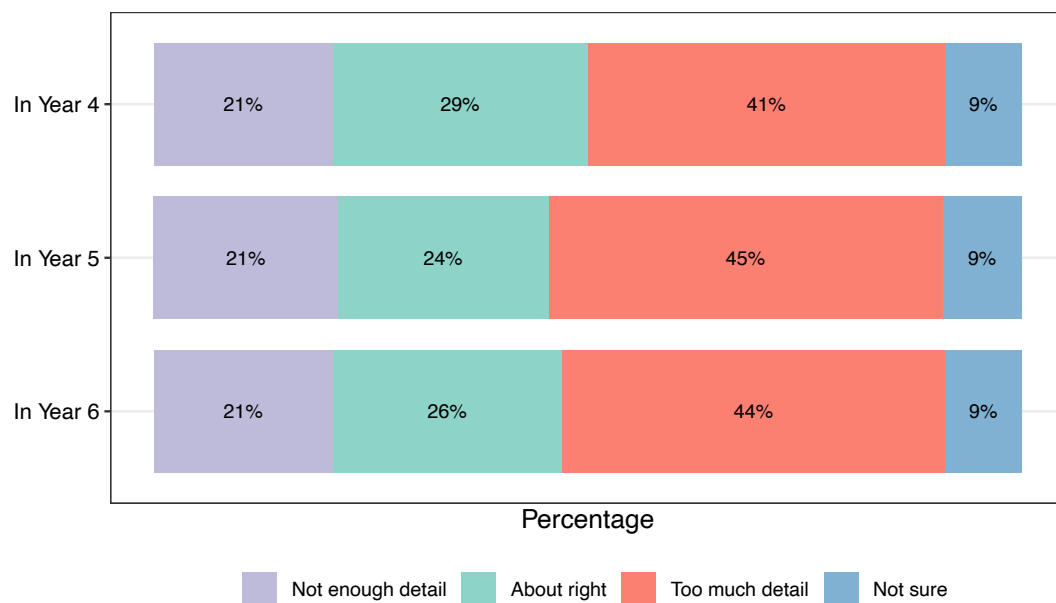
Phase 2 level of difficulty

Respondents were asked to rate the level of difficulty in the year-by-year teaching sequence, for each of Years 4–6. Figure 23 shows responses from schools, which ranged in number from 160 to 162 across the year levels, and Figure 24 shows responses from other people and groups, which ranged in number from 31 to 32.

School responses

Just under two-thirds of school respondents thought the level of difficulty in the phase 2 teaching sequence was about right at each of Years 4–6. Very few respondents thought the phase 2 teaching sequence was too easy, and none thought it was much too easy. A slightly greater proportion thought the teaching sequence was too difficult in Year 4 than in Years 5 and 6 (31%, compared with 25% and 27%).

Other responses

The largest proportion, but not the majority, of other respondents felt the difficulty was about right for each year group. At each of Years 4–6, a greater proportion of other respondents weren't sure if the level of difficulty was right than felt it was too difficult, and a greater proportion felt it was too difficult than too easy.

FIGURE 23. **Level of difficulty in the phase 2 teaching sequence, school responses (n = 160–162)**
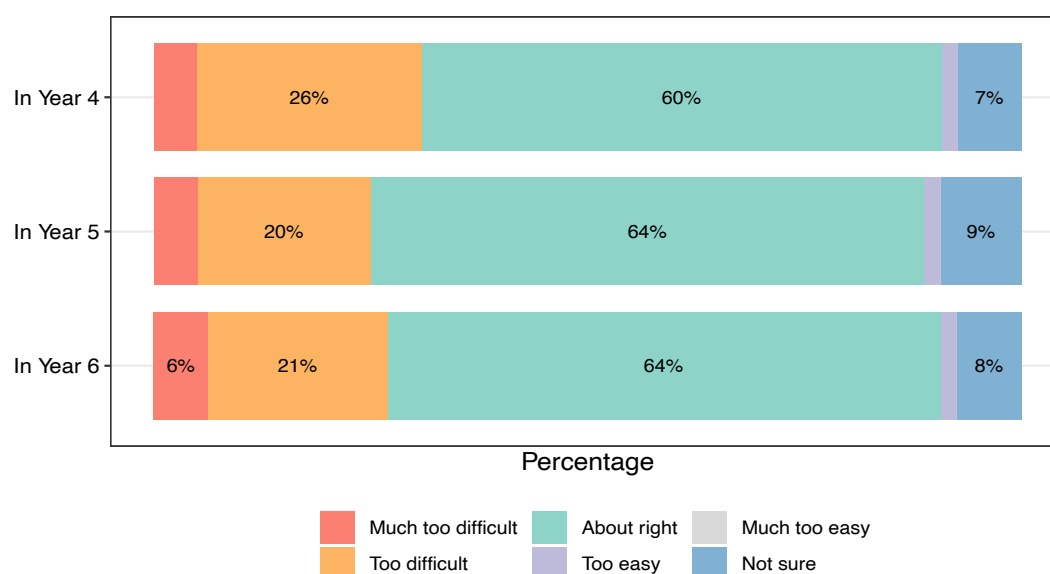
FIGURE 24. **Level of difficulty in the phase 2 teaching sequence, other responses (n = 31–32)**
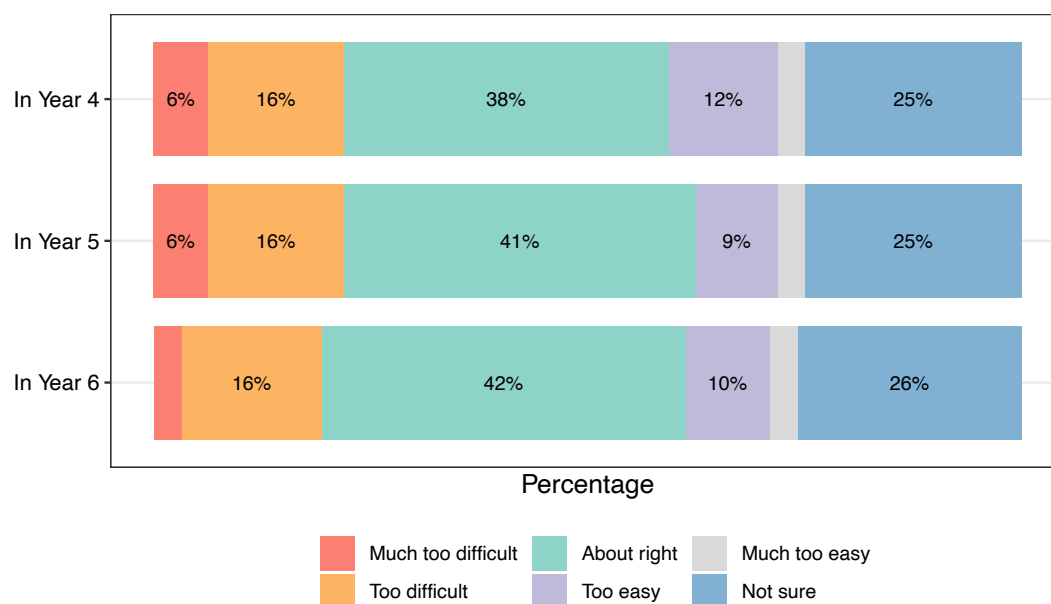
Phase 2 teaching methods

Figures 27 and 28 show respondents' level of agreement with two statements about the year-by-year teaching methods for phase 2. Figure 27 shows responses from schools (n = 166), and Figure 28 shows responses from other people and groups (n = 36).

School responses

Just under half of school respondents agreed with each of the statements about the year-by-year teaching methods for phase 2, and 30% disagreed in each case. A slightly higher proportion agreed that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers to explicitly teach the year-by-year sequence" than agreed that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers design and deliver effective learning" (49%, compared with 45%).

Other responses

Other respondents were more likely to disagree with each of the statements than they were to agree, and were more likely to disagree that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers design and deliver effective learning" (47%) than they were to disagree that "the teaching methods and examples will help teachers to explicitly teach the year-by-year sequence" (42%).

Open comments

In response to an open question "Is there anything else you would like to see within the teaching sequence that will support learners to be successful in learning?" (for phase 2), there were 118 comments from schools and 28 comments from other respondents. Themes from open responses are discussed in Section 8.

FIGURE 25. **Phase 2 teaching methods, school responses (n = 166)**
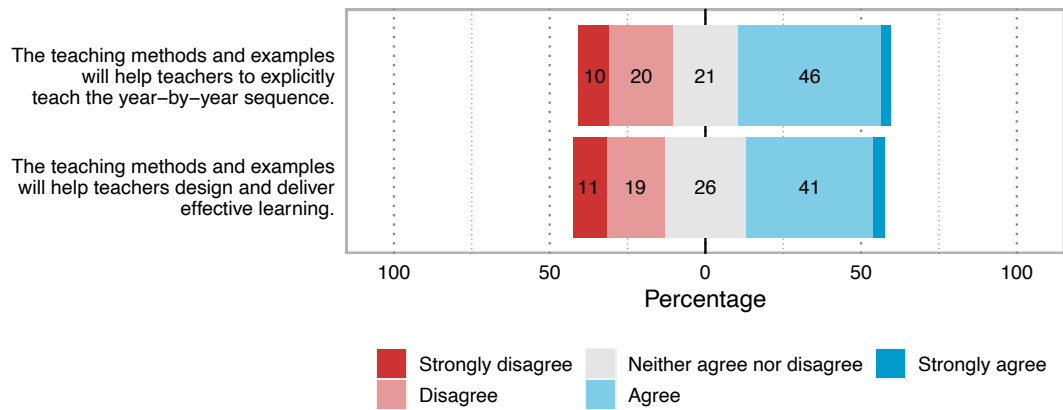
FIGURE 26. **Phase 2 teaching methods, other responses (n = 36)**
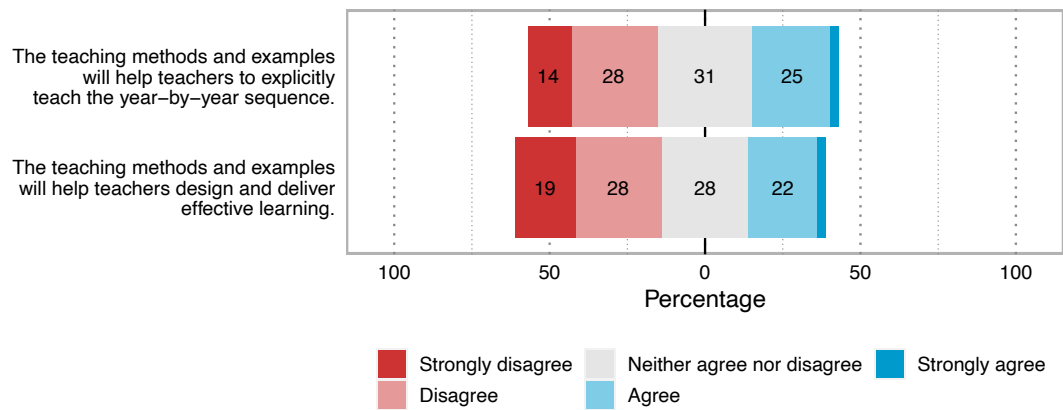
6. Overall feedback on the learning area

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked to rate their agreement with eight statements providing overall feedback about the draft learning area and answer one open question.

There were 296 school responses and 63 other responses to the eight statements.[3] Figures 29 and 30 show responses from each grouping.

In response to the open question "Is there anything else you would like to see within the Years 0–6 English learning area that will support students to be successful in their learning?", there were 186 comments from school respondents, and 48 comments from other respondents. Themes from open responses are discussed in Section 8.

School responses

Of the eight statements in this section, the least agreement was with the statement "it is inclusive of all students" (19% agreement and 57% disagreement, about half of that strong). The majority of school respondents chose to neither agree nor disagree with "it is internationally comparable", while the remainder were fairly evenly split between agreement and disagreement. There was more agreement than disagreement overall for each of the other six statements. The highest rates of agreement were with the statements "it is knowledge rich" (69%) and "it is organised logically" (67%).

Other responses

There was more disagreement than agreement from other respondents with each of the eight statements. The statement with the least agreement was "it is internationally comparable"; however, this statement didn't have the highest rate of disagreement due to the 35% who neither agreed nor disagreed. The highest rate of disagreement was with the statement "it is inclusive of all students" (65% disagreement overall, 44% strong disagreement). The highest rate of agreement was with the statement that "it is knowledge rich" (38%), closely followed by "it uses consistent and clear language" (36%).

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3   There were fewer responses to this section than to the first section of the survey due to some dropout attrition.

FIGURE 27. **Overall feedback on the draft learning area, school responses (n = 186)**
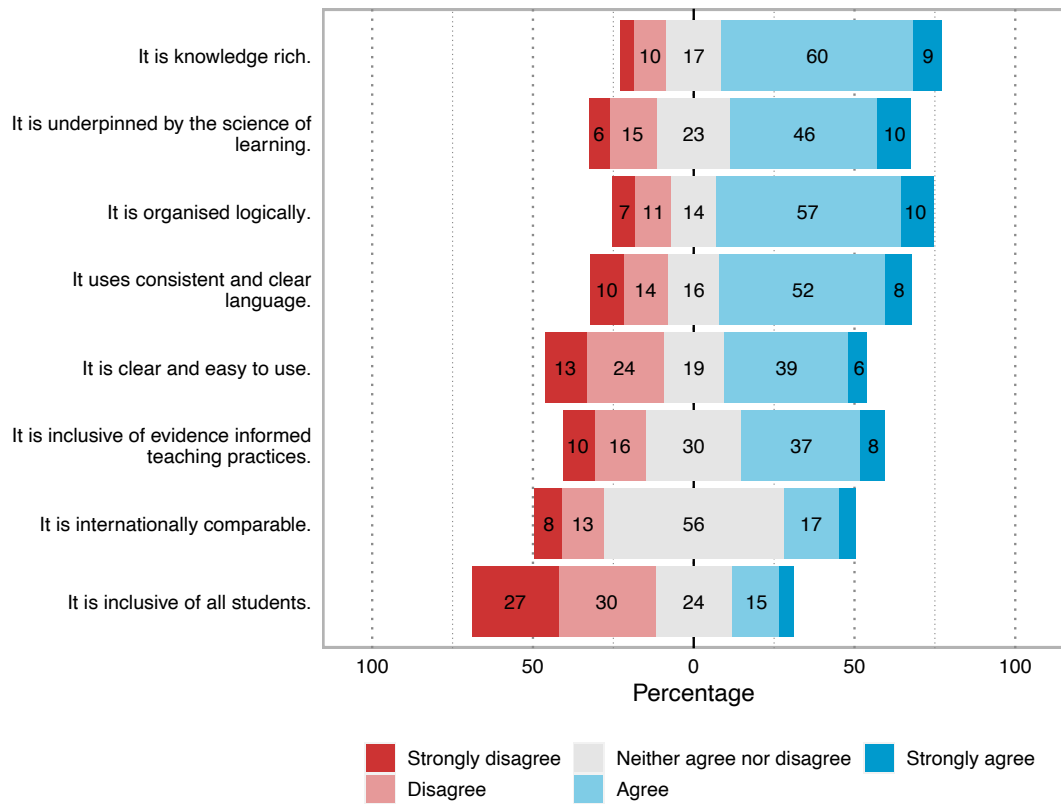
FIGURE 28. **Overall feedback on the draft learning area, other responses (n = 48)**
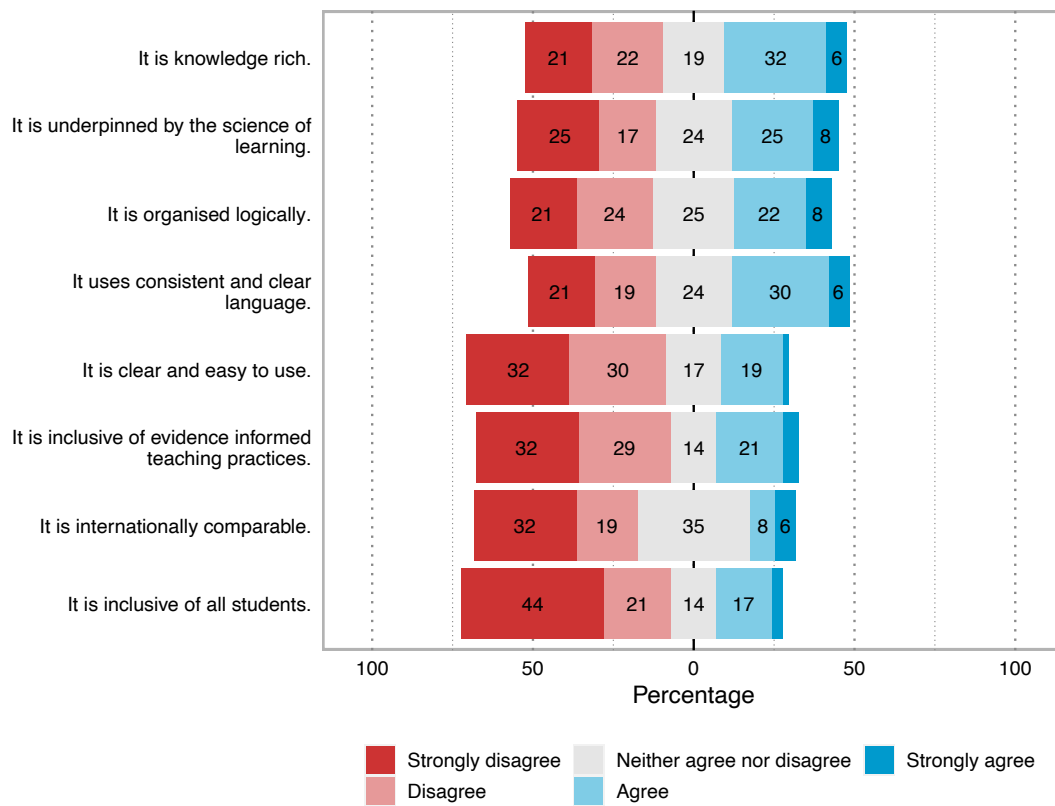
7. Support needs and resources

The final section of the survey asking about support needs and resources was optional. One hundred and sixty-eight school respondents and 18 other respondents indicated they wished to give feedback on support materials. Respondents were asked to rate the level of support needed to understand and integrate each component of the draft curriculum. The number of responses to each component ranged from 159 to 162 for school respondents, and 16 to 18 for other respondents.[4]

Table 4 shows responses from both groups combined. The areas most frequently identified as needing a lot of support were the teaching sequence, methods, and guidance.

TABLE 4. **Support needs in relation to the learning area, all respondents**

Learning area component	Levels of support needed (% respondents)		
	No support	Some support	A lot of support
The learning area structure	24	50	26
The UKD progress outcome	19	51	29
Teaching sequence	22	45	33
Teaching methods	23	43	34
Teaching guidance	22	44	34

Respondents were also asked an open question, "What existing resources and support materials will be useful to support you?" There were 110 school and 10 other responses to this open question, which are discussed in the following section.

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4 The survey indicated that respondents who were not from a school should skip this section. However, some respondents in the non-school/other groupings responded to the survey as kāhui ako groups, or had other affiliations with schools (e.g., teachers on parental leave).

8. Themes from open comments and submissions

Analysis of open survey comments and submissions revealed key themes in relation to the English curriculum draft. Overall, there were six open questions in the survey:

- The first question asked about the teaching guidance section for phases 1–2.
- The second question asked about the planning guidance section for phases 1–2.
- There were two open questions about the teaching sequences for each of phases 1 and 2.
- One open question asked for overall feedback on the learning area.
- One open question was asked about use of existing resources.

Survey comments ranged from very brief comments covering a single point to extensive comments addressing multiple points. Similarly, the 34 submissions and additional pieces of feedback emailed directly to the Ministry of Education were written and structured in a variety of ways, ranging in length from one paragraph to multiple pages.

This section begins with an overview of high-level themes and positive feedback, followed by more specific feedback on suggested improvements in the teaching and planning guidance sections for phases 1–2. Following this, we discuss specific feedback given about the teaching sequences for phases 1 and 2, as well as comments about resources and support for implementation.

Positive feedback

The Ministry was interested in positive feedback, as well as suggestions for improvement. Generally, the open questions were asked in such a way that they tended to elicit improvement suggestions (e.g., "What else would you expect to see"?). It was less common for comments to explicitly mention the things they liked about the draft. Where respondents described what it is they like, positive comments often included suggestions for improvement. It is also worth noting that some things that are liked by some respondents were critiqued by other respondents.

Among things that some people specifically said they liked were the explicit focus on oral language, the year-level breakdown, the level of detail, the structured literacy approach, the science of learning, and the "do" elements. Some respondents indicated that they felt phase 2 was better than phase 1. Positive feedback sometimes indicated that schools were already familiar with approaches presented in the curriculum document, as in the examples below:

> This is already covered in our school but can see the examples and methods may be of assistance to others. (Feedback on phase 1, school response)

> We are very much in favour of this curriculum change. It is much better than previous whole language curriculum document and approach that we have had in the past. We are an IDeal school and are into our 3rd year. (Overall feedback, school response)

> I think the changes are excellent. I'm really pleased to see New Zealand's curriculum moving from a vague curriculum to a more explicit curriculum with standards that are more in line with international curriculums. This makes it so much clearer for teachers to know what they need to cover and will lead to better educational outcomes. (Overall feedback, other respondent)

Positive feedback was commonly offered with a "but", as in the examples below:

> We like that the 2 documents are together, and format makes sense, but it is still VERY wordy, and VERY long, and someone will make a teacher friendly copy that is less clunky that we will actually use. (Overall feedback, school response)

> Really like the overall progression, but not the very structured and rigid approach to it. (Overall feedback, school response)

> Having clear expectations by year level is really helpful for teachers, especially those at the beginning of their careers. I do think, however, that there needs to be a balance between giving sufficient guidance and clarity and having so much content that it becomes counterproductive. (Overall feedback, school response)

Areas for improvement

While there were aspects of the draft curriculum that people liked, there were hundreds of critical and improvement-focused comments across the survey responses and submissions. One of the biggest concerns expressed by respondents was about ensuring that the English Years 0–6 curriculum content is inclusive and achievable for all learners. There were hundreds of comments about whether the expectations for learners at each phase and year level could be met by all learners, including students with diverse needs. Respondents referred to learners arriving at school with differing levels of readiness, ELL or ESOL learners, learners with various learning support needs, and learners who progressed at different rates. Particular concerns were expressed with respect to phase 1 and in the first 6–12 months. There was also feedback about the amount and prioritisation of content in the document, particularly at phase 1. Many people provided detailed responses on particular aspects of content felt to be missing, misrepresented, or given too much/little emphasis in the draft document. Broad to specific aspects of content were highlighted, depending on how respondents felt about the introduction of structured literacy approaches. Concerns were also expressed about how teachers will be able to find adequate guidance, examples, and support for their teaching practice, including differentiation of teaching, and assessment practices. Hundreds of comments were also received about the "overwhelming" amount of information in the draft, with a layout that is difficult to navigate, and the excessive use of jargon or terminology that needs further explanation. Other themes pertained to concerns about whether the draft adequately reflects the Aotearoa New Zealand context, questions about the research and evidence base underpinning the content, concern around the fusion of approaches, and the notion of international comparability.

The following sections describe specific feedback themes in relation to each part of the draft document that respondents were invited to comment on.

Feedback on phases 1 and 2 teaching guidance

The teaching guidance section included five subsections: *The science of learning in practice; Explicit teaching; Elements of structured literacy approaches; Positive relationships with oral language, reading, and writing;* and *Working with texts is at the core of English.* The planning guidance section contained four subsections: *Planning for an hour a day; Planning for variability in learning; Planning for assessment;* and *Planning for effective grouping practices.* Analysis of responses to the open question about what else respondents would expect to see in the teaching and planning guidance sections revealed similar themes for both. Themes in the feedback related to four main areas of improvement: presentation, language, and ease of use; content priorities; support for all learners; and teacher support, guidance, and recognition.

Presentation, language, and ease of use of the document

Feedback on improving the accessibility/layout of the teaching and planning guidance sections included suggestions to:

- make the teaching and planning guidance more succinct, with greater coherence between oral language, reading, and writing as well as other curriculum areas
- reduce the amount of wordy information in the document so it is less overwhelming
- improve the layout to make it easier to navigate, perhaps using bullet points, diagrams, and overview/summary tables while reducing written text
- use simpler language with less jargon and define linguistic/ literacy terms more clearly.

The quotes below are illustrative.

> What needs to be present is a concise overview, the level of detail is cognitive overload for teachers. (Feedback on teaching guidance, school response)

> We believe that this section is insufficient and does not offer adequate guidance for teachers to use this document and plan for instruction. We see curriculum as a 'three-legged stool' with three components: teaching sequence, high-quality materials, and assessment. This 'curriculum' only addresses one of these components, and the planning guidance does not sufficiently address how to teach the sequence. (Feedback on planning guidance, school response)

Feedback on layout, presentation, and language recurred throughout the survey, including many comments about the document as a whole:

> There is a lot in this curriculum and it's very wordy—could it be condensed/ simplified further? (Submission feedback, School team)

Content priorities

Feedback on addressing content priorities included suggestions to:

- include "missing" areas in the teaching and planning guidance sections, such as a greater focus on meaning making (not just technical aspects of decoding/encoding), visual literacies, handwriting, phonological awareness, comprehension, critical literacies multimodal texts, reading fluency, and reading for pleasure
- provide a clearer scope and sequence to reduce ambiguity with multiple structured literacy approaches and providers currently being used in schools

- prioritise teaching and planning guidance that has a unique Aotearoa New Zealand flavour, including stronger bicultural foundations with emphasis on te ao Māori and te reo Māori and to focus more on *learner* engagement, enrichment, and extension at the centre of planning and teaching, not only *teacher* actions and activities:

The quotes below are illustrative.

What is the vision we have for our learners in our bicultural country? What are our definitions of English and of literacy/literacies? Where do those definitions come from and whose, and what purposes do they serve? Teaching requires a broader view/a philosophical base if it is to be ethical and responsive for learners. (Feedback on teaching guidance, other respondent)

Most of this is useful, clarifying high but achievable expectations for each level, but it needs to acknowledge 21st century text forms including visual and online texts. This is the reality for today's tamariki and teachers need guidance in how to leverage this to enhance the learning. (Feedback on planning guidance, other respondent)

There needs to be a mention in the purpose statement or teaching sequence regarding using local curriculum in order to support Māori students to learn as Māori, to support tikanga Māori, Mātauranga Māori, and Te Ao Māori. (Submission feedback, union organisation)

Support for all learners

Feedback on supporting all learners included suggestions to:

- provide greater guidance on addressing the needs of diverse learners (e.g., ELL/ESOL, neurodiverse, and disabled students) in both mainstream and specialist settings
- provide more information on how teachers can support new entrant learners with diverse needs on starting school (e.g., little oral language, limited self-regulation, and trauma), with a view to meeting the achievement objectives in the first 6–12 months
- explain the range and type of assessments that teachers will be expected to use to guide teaching and planning for learners across all phases
- explain how teachers will be able to provide differentiated support for all learners, including those who require Tier 2 and 3 support:

The quotes below are illustrative.

Children are not ready for this. Why are you asking us to overload a child in their first and second year at school. Disappointing. Very poor. Curriculum DOES NOT match child development. (Feedback on teaching guidance, school response)

Language around assessment is too vague. We need more specific guidance on which assessments are used when and for what purpose. This is an area that does need more clarity and cohesion— diagnostic/ formative etc. (Feedback on planning guidance, school response)

One key element missing in the teaching guidelines is practical advice on how to scaffold lessons for students with varying abilities. I would expect to see more explicit strategies for differentiating instruction, especially for students with oral language, reading, or writing challenges. Additionally, there should be clearer guidance on how the skills progress from year to year and how teachers can connect these skills in a structured literacy framework. (Feedback on teaching guidance, other respondent)

Lack of reference to culturally responsive practice was also mentioned:

There is no section on planning for diversity or being culturally responsive in teachers' planning. (Feedback on teaching guidance, school response)

Teacher support, guidance, and recognition

With regards to teacher support, guidance, and recognition, feedback included suggestions to:

- provide practical resources and professional learning and development (PLD) to better explain how teachers will cover the required scope and sequence, including clear guidance on assessments to be used
- acknowledge the professional expertise and judgement of teachers in making decisions about/ for their learners and local learning contexts, and their need for creativity and flexibility to do so
- define key terms/terminology more clearly (e.g., definitions, hyperlinks or a glossary)
- provide more explicit guidelines and exemplars on teaching aspects of oral language, reading, and writing such as unit and lesson plans, plus video examples:

The quotes below are illustrative.

> Is this the role of a curriculum document? Treating teachers as if they cannot understand or do not have the intelligence to bring with them their own effective practice shows a disrespect for the profession and suggests that they are unable to do this. Seriously, did the writers of the suggested teaching tasks etc. think that teachers were unable to or were not intelligent enough to create wonderful learning opportunities within their own classrooms that will work for their students? If you want to suggest teaching sequences put it in a handbook! (Feedback on teaching guidance, organisation response)

> Really disappointed with the how to suck eggs approach described in the teaching methods. The narrow view of English that has been presented in this document is very concerning. The way it has been written undermines teachers, the profession and will not meet the needs of our students. (Overall feedback, PLD provider)

> There are references to assessment—but the only example given seemed to be a phonics check. If we are interested in children becoming powerfully literate, surely what we want to know about is how they are making sense of meaningful and connected text! (Feedback on planning guidance, other response)

> Direct, clear guidance. I'm not a fan of the fluffy language in the paragraphs. Busy and beginning teachers won't have the time to unpack this. (Feedback on teaching guidance, school response)

Many respondents also made comments about the allocation of time and funding that would be needed for teachers to learn, plan, and implement all areas:

> How do we support teachers who need to up-skill in their understanding of this? What is the time frame? Who will lead support of this in schools? Will there be a cost for the schools? (Feedback on teaching guidance, school response)

> This is a statement of 'what' without any explanation of 'how'. Where are the links to resources and ideas? Or someone who needs planning guidance, there is nothing here to show what this looks like. There are no examples. (Feedback on planning guidance, school response)

We noticed that most of the themes described above recurred across different parts of the survey.

Feedback on teaching sequences for phases 1 and 2

This section summarises feedback about other things people would have liked to see within the teaching sequences for phases 1 and 2. Key themes in the feedback included the need for realistic expectations of what learners are ready to be taught, supporting diverse learning/language needs, incorporating te reo Māori, being culturally responsive, addressing content priorities, clarifying scope and sequence, supporting teacher knowledge/autonomy, and teacher support, guidance, and time.

Teaching expectations for learners

Across feedback for both phases, there were a substantial number of comments about expectations about what learners were ready to be taught, with these concerns being more prominent in phase 1 than in phase 2. Some comments suggested that the expectations are too high, especially for students in their first 6 months of school:

> Push the 6 months and Year 1 further along. I feel sorry for the teachers and learners of this area of the school if they are expected to pack this much in when the very clear brain science tells us many tamariki are not ready for this yet, and they are adjusting to new systems, routines and relationships (especially in the first 6 months). This is not taking into account anyone's hauora. (Feedback on phase 1, school response)

> As with Maths, I see the difficulty has increased at each stage. Year 3's are expected to write paragraphs?? The curriculum doesn't address the issues we have with students starting school with such great needs now. There is so much to cover in that first year, but many children are still learning to sit still for more than 30 seconds, some are struggling with toileting, emotional regulation etc. The first 6 months of school is about learning to be at school. Where does the curriculum fit with that? There is a lot of research around best practice for explicit instruction in literacy and maths, and it tends not to be with such high expectations at 5 years old. (Feedback on phase 1, school response)

> I believe that some of the sentence structure examples in writing are too difficult for the average Year 5 or Year 6 student. I taught across Years 4–8 in four different countries and some of the examples are more suitable for Year 7 students. For instance, I delivered the Year 6 SATS (NZ Year 7 age) in the UK. Only the strongest students could understand and accurately apply embedded clause sentences consistently in their writing. (Feedback on phase 2, school response)

Supporting learners with diverse needs

Concerns were also raised about supporting learners with diverse needs (e.g., neurodiverse students, English language learners, and those with additional learning needs). Some comments expressed concern that students with diverse learning needs will be left behind and "the inequity between struggling learners and able learners [was] going to grow exponentially":

> Have students who have no ECE [early childhood education] experience been considered within the learning progressions? Many of our students have not been at school before and in the first 6 months are getting used to school—social skills. They may even take a few weeks to express their thoughts. What about students where English is not their first language? (Feedback on phase 1)

> Are we considering the children who are coming to school with high needs, trauma needs, or variety of different backgrounds? Are we considering the children who come to school with nothing …
> In year one—they are learning the basic foundation literacy skills, e.g. rhyme, syllables, auditory discrimination … then the alphabet plus digraphs/trigraphs … then learning to blend (which takes up so much time to learn). And you'd like them to be on Māhuri. This is a LOT! (Feedback on phase 1)

ESOL learners have a very limited mention. ESOL learners make up 35% of our kura. This is important to us. (Feedback on phase 1)

Year 0–3 is very intense. There is assumption that prior knowledge is there at Year 0. Coverage of content is a concern. Zero acknowledgement of neurodivergent learners or learners that need a great deal of support. (Feedback on phase 2)

The inclusion of eye contact must be modified with the reminder that for some students with ASD, eye contact is NOT good to expect as that will overload them and make the critical skills (the oral communication part) harder for them to achieve. (Feedback on Phase 2)

Additionally, there was a call to consider children's language backgrounds:

There also needs to be some guidance provided for teaching ākonga who have literacy in language/s other than English. Where is the recognition of transferring skills in the first 6 months of learners who have begun their literacy journey in another language/s? Surely we do not want to discourage the continued learning of mother tongue/s—acknowledgement of this somewhere is important. (Feedback on phase 1)

Why is there invisibility about any language(s) and experiences that students arrive at school with? 'If I can't see me, I can't be me.' (Feedback on phase 2)

Cultural responsiveness

Some comments on the phases 1 and 2 teaching sequences highlighted the importance of incorporating te reo Māori and increasing cultural responsiveness:

We see the teaching methods and examples as an area where mātauranga should be included— currently the draft reads as if it could be the curriculum from the UK or any other English-speaking country, not Aotearoa New Zealand. (Feedback on phase 1)

I think it is essential to consider the phonics books we are using in Aotearoa New Zealand—they need to be culturally responsive books to represent New Zealand and our Pacific neighbours. I.e., using Australian/American/Singapore resources is not culturally responsive to the sense of belonging for tamariki. (Feedback on phase 1)

Lack of perspectives underpinned by te ao Māori. (Feedback on both phases)

Content coverage and prioritisation

A large amount of feedback was received about content prioritisation in the draft document, and across both phases. Comments about content spanned a wide range of topics, from broad to specific areas that people either thought were missing, unclear, or biased in the curriculum draft.

Things perceived to be missing

Broad feedback included overarching principles, values, philosophies, or theories that people felt were absent or not clearly portrayed:

There is an EXTREMELY narrow concept of knowledges (intentional emphasis on plural) that are being required, marginalising and eliminating other knowledges, strengths and capabilities children will have. (Feedback on phase 1)

Greater emphasis on literary texts. Greater focus on storytelling in its various modes. Enabling students to generate creative forms of writing, rather than a singular emphasis on correct 'composition'. A stronger understanding of the recursive nature of language learning rather than a singular view of language acquisition and development as linear. (Feedback on phase 1)

Has a narrow view of what literacy actually is. Students of today and tomorrow will require knowledge (and will use, challenge and critique their knowledge) in multimedia literacies practices. (Feedback on phase 2)

A greater focus on socio-cultural contexts. More emphasis on creating meaning across the various language modes. (Feedback on phase 2)

Some submissions expressed concern around the level of prescriptiveness contained in the draft, likening the document to more of a syllabus than a curriculum, and with little room for teachers to exercise professional judgement:

The level of granularity and explicit direction constitutes a *syllabus* to be enacted by teachers rather than a document that supports curriculum *design* for diverse ākonga and contexts. (Submission feedback, university academic)

Balance, integration, prioritisation

Most content feedback focused on specific areas that people would have liked to see included, better integrated, or given a different emphasis. These areas included oral language, phonological awareness (PA) and listening, visual/critical literacies, reading fluency, and writing.

In terms of oral language, many felt that there was too much detail in the oral language section, relative to the rest of the document:

There is so much in oral language alone, I think you need to reduce to amount of 'Learning Objectives' otherwise we will spend all of our teaching time assessing. There will be no time for creativity, fun and play and NZ will no longer have the strength of producing calm, happy people who work well together and are creative at problem solving. Let's face it, we can't keep our creativity in a pressure cooker! (Feedback on phase 1)

Many also wanted to see greater integration between strands of oral language, reading, and writing:

While there are 3 'strands'—oral language, reading and writing—there is no indication that the science of learning principles have been embedded showing that students need to develop strong phonological awareness and oral language before reading and writing. Reading and writing should not be separated but considered to be developed together supporting the student's development of English. (Feedback on phase 1)

By treating the 3 areas as separately as it has, and not acknowledging the overlap, the doc is bloated by writing the same stuff in every area, but in slightly different ways. (Feedback on phase 1)

There is too much repetition in the comprehension area of reading and not enough link made between oral language and reading and writing to show how these goals exist together—which is what literacy is. (Feedback on phase 2)

Many respondents requested more emphasis on PA and listening:

LISTENING needs to have its own space and a special focus. It is only mentioned about twice and embedded into oral language generally. (Feedback on phase 1)

Very little reference to PA, encoding and decoding, the foundations of a structured approach to literacy—again, no scope and sequence—so very important! BSLA scope and sequence is evidence based and aligns with phonics plus texts—should this not be referenced? Otherwise very confusing. (Feedback on phase 1)

More emphasis on manipulating sounds—segment[ing] and blending in oral language (Heggerty phonological skills). (Feedback on phase 1)

Writing was also an area where there were many comments about different aspects that were missing:

> Biggest worry—handwriting   Will there be a specific programme for handwriting from 0–6? (Feedback on phase 1)

> Correct pencil grip in Yr 0–1 is a MUST! We need to ensure children have this correct early in their learning. (Feedback on phase 1)

> The writing process suggested is too linear. How we teach writing through IDeal, editing is a process that we do as we write. Focus on writing quality not quantity. Learners should not be expected to be writing in paragraphs by the end of Year 1. We want to ensure that our students are writing quality. (Feedback on phase 1)

> Writing: There should be differentiation between sentence structure and punctuation between all year groups (p 108)—and when it is separated, there is only one word difference between the year groups. (Feedback on phase 2)

Many comments also related to the need for a greater focus on visual and critical literacies:

> More emphasis on critical literacies and the importance of the learner interrogating texts. (Feedback on phase 1)

> Where is the visual language strand?! This is so critical to developing as effective communicators and developing comprehension across a variety of modes.   We feel that Phase 2 is lacking a focus on literature with possibly too much focus on mechanical functional literacies. (Feedback on phase 2)

> Where is the Visual Language in the curriculum? Our world in which we live is highly visual and students needs to learn to be critical examiners of visual language at a very young age. I think it is a real shame to have this area removed from the curriculum. (Feedback on phase 2)

Reading fluency was also mentioned by many respondents as requiring greater emphasis:

> Include fluency in reading texts and not lists of words only. Fluency includes phrasing, intonation, expression and attention to punctuation. (Feedback on phase 1)

> Reading fluency needs more detail––suggest separating 'reading accurately' and 'reading expressively' as 2 bullet points and define them from there. Also suggest adding 'chunking' of sentences to increase fluency. (Feedback on phase 2)

Scope and sequence

Hundreds of comments mentioned the scope and sequence of the content across both phases, with mixed opinions on it being ambiguous, too difficult for learners, or missing in elements:

> Why are they mentioning Ready to read colour wheel books which are not decodables and do not follow the Science of Reading—6 months and Year 1? (Feedback on phase 1)

> Need to have a better scope and sequence which starts with phonemic and phonological awareness in Yr 0–1, first 6 months especially BEFORE moving onto CVC [consonant vowel consonant] words. For instance, singing the alphabet does not help children learn phonological awareness—they need specific, explicit, sequenced teaching that builds phonological awareness. (Feedback on phase 1)

> A more precise scope and sequence for each area. In term 1 we will focus on x. In term 2 we will build on what is known and introduce … I believe there is not enough emphasis or room for spiralling review which is so important and necessary. (Feedback on phase 2)

Clearly, this is a document supporting BSLA. There is a scope and sequence being proposed without it being clearly outlined. If we are going to have a NZ scope and sequence (and I have called for that) can we please be clear about it? (Submission feedback, deputy principal/academic)

Support, guidance, and time

A large amount of feedback indicated that teachers wanted more examples, guidance, and time to navigate the changes. Examples below indicate the sorts of things respondents asked for:

There needs to be more examples attached via a link to examples of how to teach different aspects. (Feedback on phase 1)

The time a teacher spends going through and supporting (telling students the words they cannot read) takes away valuable time from students applying their knowledge they have been taught reading decodable texts. (Feedback on phase 1)

More guidance around how writing will look. More oral language guidance—links to plans, appropriate supports. Digital Technologies in Literacy—how will this look—word processing programs. (Feedback on phase 2)

In addition, some comments emphasised a desire for greater teacher autonomy and trust in their professionalism, particularly highlighted by phase 1 feedback. For example:

I would like to see teachers given professional trust and allow[ed] to be responsive practitioners. (Feedback on phase 1)

The teaching examples are a lot and some are very patronising and undermine the fact that we are trained teachers. (Feedback on phase 1)

Level of detail—suggests that teachers do not know particular content. This will support beginning teachers but what about experienced teachers and schools that have thriving literacy practices. (Feedback on phase 1)

Finally, there was also considerable feedback on improving access to information contained in both learning phases. Suggestions for improvement include: 1) Simpler and clearer wording; 2) reduced repetition; and 3) more clarity around terminology. Some illustrative comments are shown below:

I think the teaching examples are useful. However, the document is extremely wordy because of the examples. Perhaps these need to be trimmed down. (Feedback on phase 1)

While there may be 'a lot' of words written in each statement, that does not equate to sufficient detail in terms of a scope and sequence. (Feedback on phase 1)

I'm a little confused by the terminology 'structures of rhetoric', unless I've missed an explanation of it, or it was going to be mentioned in the glossary. This seems a little high level for primary school teachers. It might be more helpful to say, 'persuasive techniques such as the rule of three, repetition, and alliteration'. (Feedback on Phase 2)

Overall feedback comments

Comments in the open question inviting overall feedback on the learning area reiterated many of the same themes already discussed, and these were also seen in submissions. The dominant theme in this section once again related to concerns about the inclusivity and support for all learners, and a perceived lack of recognition of, and guidance for, supporting learners with different starting points, rates of learning progress, additional learning needs, and different language backgrounds:

The lack of mention of differentiation is concerning—the curriculum is not written to be inclusive of learners with a diverse range of needs. There is no mention of response to teaching/intervention or a multi-tiered systems of support framework. (Overall feedback, education organisation)

Didn't think the disabled learner was in the document at all. (Discussion notes, disability focus group)

I would like to see the pressure taken off the first 6 months–1 year of learning, and the progress indicators within this wrapped into a 'within the first 2 years' model. You are going to break the spirit of ākonga and kaiako putting this much pressure on in the very beginning parts of formal schooling. (Overall feedback, school response)

I have grave concerns that the draft as presented focuses on what ākonga (learners) are not able to do. Early and frequent standardised testing will only reinforce this positioning. The detailed scope and sequence provide limited potential for kaiako (teachers) to differentiate for diverse ākonga. The diverse cultural and linguistic capitals that ākonga bring to school will be sidelined. Similarly, there were concerns about the progress expected of learners with disabilities and/or complex learning needs in each of the phases. (Submission feedback, university academic)

The need for adequate learning support was also raised. There were repeated calls for more teaching guidance, examples, support, and resources (see "Resources and support" subsection). The speed and timing of implementation expectations, and lack of sufficient information about resources and support, were commented on:

The biggest issue for me is the resourcing necessary to implement this document while meeting the needs of diverse groups of learners with a huge range of needs. How will schools be resourced to help children meet age-appropriate learning outcomes when they have language or learning needs? (Overall feedback, school response)

The previous refreshed curriculum had accompanying teacher support materials. At present, there is no equivalent with the refresh … The curriculum requires extensive teacher knowledge—what PLD will be put in place (apart from SL PLD) for teachers to be able to implement it? Simply providing PLD for SL will not cover the demands of the full English curriculum. Asking teachers to implement new literacy and maths curricula at the same time seems unwise. It seems ironic in a time when there is recognition of the impact of cognitive overload. The change management model seems flawed. (Submission feedback, kāhui ako)

Some feedback expressed concern around the curriculum writing and consultation processes:

I wish I could have given more in-depth feedback and to focus on the positive as well as on my concerns, but the length of the document and the short timeframe have meant I have not had time to do so properly. To me, this underlines that the document is too long to be truly useful. (Submission feedback, teacher)

We are concerned about the lack of proper process around the Ministerial Advisory Group and the writing group and the lack of representativeness and expertise. We also have strong concerns about the intervention in the feedback process by one of the members of the Ministerial Advisory Group who has been offering guidance to followers on social media about the feedback they might give. This is a further breach of process. The timeframe for feedback is very short and does not allow for the level of consideration needed to ensure a quality curriculum. (Submission feedback, subject association)

Questions around the research and evidence base and the notion of international comparability

There were questions and critique raised about the underpinning research and evidence base, including the way science of learning was used and framed. Some commented that they couldn't tell if it was underpinned by a research and evidence base because no research was referenced. There were calls for greater use of New Zealand-based research:

> I don't know if this is underpinned by the science. I feel like if it was you would be proudly sharing that fact. (Overall feedback, school response)

> We consider that the current document draws on incomplete view of the sciences of learning and suggest including learning with and from others, the contribution of aligned disciplines of linguistics, the humanities (English) and pedagogy, as well as consideration of implementation science and improvement science. 'Science of learning' as it is used in this document overstates the value of the breakdown of complex skills into small units. (Submission feedback, university academics)

> Provide a contemporary, relevant, research base that justifies the use of the identified approaches and the exclusion of other approaches to literacy pedagogy. Without an evidence-based rationale, the revised curriculum is at risk of becoming outdated on the world stage. Create a resource hub that kaiako, teacher educators and researchers can engage with in order to extend and expand upon the evolving research base. Add a section on theoretical approaches for kaiako (similar to *Te Whāriki*). (Overall feedback, primary and ITE teacher)

> Whose knowledge is being valued? This is such a Pākehā centric, middle class language supporting curriculum. Different dialects are valid and valued and the original draft curriculum centred this. We are missing the ScienceS [sic] of learning—where's the work about translanguaging? [e.g.,] The work of people like Jacoba Matapo and Rae Si'ilata. Aotearoa | NZ academics who have so much to offer an English curriculum in our diverse nation. (Overall feedback, facilitator/PLD provider)

> Where is the evidence supporting this? Is it NZ based? How is the government protecting schools from all the companies 'selling' their programmes? Where are the government programmes? Why aren't we all just doing BSLA which is NZ developed and researched? (Overall feedback, school response)

The notion of international comparability was also commented on. Some respondents asked "which countries" we should be compared to. Some suggested unfavourable comparisons with other countries including the UK:

> This draft document appears to be a copy and paste from the UK, a country that actually is not achieving high levels of literacy. This curriculum is not pitched at the correct level for child development. Why the rush to accelerate learning? It is proven NOT to work in the UK. (Overall feedback, school response)

Finally, there was feedback on the lack of visibility of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and te ao Māori, bicultural priorities, and local identities:

> Where is the acknowledgement our Māori learners or Te Tiriti o Waitangi? (Overall feedback, school response)

> Mātauranga has been removed from this draft document so it appears that knowledge rich means Pākehā and Western. This doesn't sit well with us—there is a clear body of research that shows that what is 'knowledge rich' is contested. Acknowledging that mātauranga is part of what is 'knowledge rich' in Aotearoa New Zealand curriculum is essential. (Overall feedback, subject association)

> Te Tiriti principles: This curriculum seems to be based on the Science of Learning and evidence-based but very much through a Western lens. What does this mean for our Māori and Pasifika students? Those who are already disadvantaged in our system? (Overall feedback, academic/tertiary provider)

Many wanted to see cultural responsiveness and equity for all learners from culturally diverse backgrounds reflected in the document and in supporting resources:

> This draft English document doesn't adequately reflect the fact we live in a diverse and bicultural nation that demands a curriculum with breadth, depth and vision. (Overall feedback, academic/tertiary provider)

> Cultural responsiveness and strong sense of belonging using books with NZ icons, heritages, stories based in te Tiriti o Waitangi and imagery of our multilingual landscape—not using decodables made in Australia/USA/Singapore etc. (Overall feedback, school response)

Resources and support

Finally, when asked "What existing resources and support materials will be useful to support you with the implementation of the English learning area?", most respondents identified specific existing resources and support that they wanted to be further provided, improved, and updated. Many referenced different Ministry of Education resources, with the BSLA mentioned most frequently, along with "previous best practice examples available on TKI" and "the ELL-inclusive strategies currently on TKI". Some comments emphasised the need for updated materials, such as "Updated writing assessments e.g., asTTle".

There were requests for more reading books and a wider variety of learning materials. For example:

> Individual books about each grapheme/phoneme. i.e., a/ sound. Both big for whole class and small books that could go in book boxes. Smaller sound cards that could be put on a ring and be put into children's book boxes. Practice worksheets that align with the phonics plus books. (School response)

> Many, many, many more books in every school, particularly decodable texts for older readers and high-interest high-quality fiction and non-fiction books for everyone. These need to be present in large numbers in every classroom and in every school library. (School response)

Some comments asked for a better funding scheme (e.g., "Funding for the actual reading books etc 500 dollars is not enough"), while others requested more exemplars and examples:

> Staff would like hyperlinks to resources and examples of good teacher practice in all areas. They would like examples of how this document can be integrated across the curriculum. As a staff we have never had any real upskilling in the teaching of oral language and we would like support in this area. We would also like to know the best way to build on the skills in the document. Are some practices more effective than others. (School response)

Many respondents also described resources and support they would like to see to support their planning, teaching, assessment, and reporting. Many emphasised the necessity of facilitated professional development for teachers, by commenting "Schools should be given PD [professional development] time and resources to supplement the Curriculum". Additionally, there was a call for more time to implement the curriculum effectively:

> Time—lots of time. Time to increase teacher knowledge, teaching strategies. (School response)

Appendices

APPENDIX A:
Demographics of school respondents — by respondent

The tables in Appendix A show the school demographics of every survey response that included a school ID or identifiable school name (n = 306). There were 17 responses "from a school" that could not be matched to a school name or ID. Some schools may be counted more than once in these demographics (e.g., if more than one response was received from the same school).

Urban/rural	Count	Percent
Large urban area	61	20
Major urban area	141	46
Medium urban area	31	10
Rural other	24	8
Rural settlement	23	8
Small urban area	26	8

School type	Count	Percent
Composite	12	4
Contributing	167	55
Full primary	115	38
Intermediate	3	1
Secondary (Years 7–10)	1	0
Secondary (Years 7–15)	4	1
Secondary (Years 9–15)	1	0
Specialist school	3	1

Education region	Count	Percent
Bay of Plenty, Waiariki	11	4
Canterbury, Chatham Islands	45	15
Hawke's Bay, Tairāwhiti	36	12
Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast	15	5
Otago, Southland	30	10
Tai Tokerau	11	4
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū	19	6
Tāmaki Herenga Manawa	36	12
Tāmaki Herenga Tāngata	38	12
Tāmaki Herenga Waka	9	3
Waikato	20	7
Wellington	36	12

Equity Index grouping	Count	Percent
Fewer barriers	177	58
Moderate barriers	97	32
More barriers	30	10
Not applicable	2	1

Roll	Count	Percent
0–100	21	7
101–300	90	29
301–500	88	29
501–1,000	102	33
>1,000	5	2

APPENDIX B:
Demographics of school survey respondents — by unique school ID

The tables in Appendix B show the demographics of schools from which responses were received. In these tables, each school is counted only once, regardless of how many responses were received from that school. In these tables, n = 191.

Urban/rural	Count	Percent
Large urban area	38	20
Major urban area	78	41
Medium urban area	13	7
Rural other	22	12
Rural settlement	17	9
Small urban area	23	12

School type	Count	Percent
Composite	11	6
Contributing	94	49
Full primary	74	39
Intermediate	3	2
Secondary (Years 7–10)	1	1
Secondary (Years 7–15)	4	2
Secondary (Years 9–15)	1	1
Specialist school	3	2

Education region	Count	Percent
Bay of Plenty, Waiariki	10	5
Canterbury, Chatham Islands	29	15
Hawke's Bay, Tairāwhiti	12	6
Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast	14	7
Otago, Southland	18	9
Tai Tokerau	10	5
Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatū	12	6
Tāmaki Herenga Manawa	23	12
Tāmaki Herenga Tāngata	18	9
Tāmaki Herenga Waka	8	4
Waikato	16	8
Wellington	21	11

Equity Index grouping	Count	Percent
Fewer barriers	100	52
Moderate barriers	69	36
More barriers	20	10
Not applicable	2	1

Roll	Count	Percent
0–100	21	11
101–300	62	32
301–500	55	29
501–1,000	48	25
>1,000	5	3

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