Primary school teachers' perspectives from the 2024 National Survey

Uiuinga ā-Motu o ngā Kura

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Rangahau Mātauranga o Aotearoa

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2025

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NZCER conducted the National Survey of Primary Schools from October to December 2024. We invited teachers from a nationally representative sample of all English-medium full primary, contributing, and intermediate schools in Aotearoa New Zealand to complete our survey.

Teachers from a sample of 324 schools were invited to participate in the survey. After data cleaning, the final responses included in this report were from 639 teachers from 148 schools, giving a school response rate of 46%.

NZCER has run a National Survey of Primary Schools regularly since 1989, with the last survey of primary school teachers taking place in 2019. This enables us to monitor trends over time.

The report presents the findings in each of the six survey domains alongside a section on teachers' working experiences and future plans.

Key findings that stood out to us in each of the survey domains were:

Teaching and learning

- Teachers showed a high commitment to making data-driven decisions in the classroom.
- Half of the teachers reported insufficient support to teach students with learning support needs, such as neurodiverse students, and students with disability, learning difficulties, physical or mental health needs, or behaviour issues. Other findings in this report confirm that teachers want more support to teach students with learning support needs. The most selected thing that teachers would like to change about their work is having more support staff.
- Nearly all teachers explicitly teach strategies and topics that support students' social and emotional learning.
- Nearly all teachers (90%) ensured opportunities for students to be physically active, but fewer (59%) provided learning opportunities about healthy eating.
- Teachers had mixed views on whether their health programme included the impact of social media, healthy use of digital devices, and gender identity.
- Most teachers adopted explicit and intentional practices in the teaching of literacy either daily or several times a week.
- Most teachers supported cultural diversity through their literacy programme, but fewer than half (45%) reported understanding how to support students' home languages. Additionally, most teachers (70%) reported teaching students who are learning English as an additional language. Over half (57%) of these teachers are confident about catering for English language learners, but a third said they did not have access to sufficient support for them.
- Nearly all teachers frequently provided opportunities for students to share prior knowledge, practise new learning, and encounter new learning through a gradual release of responsibility.

- Most teachers identified as "he kākano (emerging/limited)" or "he whanake (developing)" level. Kaiako Māori were more likely to use te reo Māori in their classrooms with high proficiency. More teachers were confident in using short phrases and sentences in te reo Māori than in 2019.

- Nearly half (46%) of the teachers reported using AI tools in their teaching. The most common use of AI was to develop learning materials (85% of teachers who use AI reported this use). Lack of AI knowledge and training was the biggest barrier preventing teachers from integrating AI into their practice (74% of non-users reported this). While many teachers were positive about AI, uncertainty remained, especially among those without experience.

- More than two-thirds of the teachers expected moderate to major climate impacts in their students' lifetimes. Half of the teachers (51%) were confident to address climate change issues in their classroom programme.

Curriculum and assessment

- Nearly all (93%) teachers made good use of formative assessment practices and most (78%) used the results from standardised tools to inform their teaching. Use of assessments that reflect students' lived experiences and cultural heritage was not widespread.

- Half (53%) of the teachers indicated that curriculum changes were going in the right direction and 37% were neutral. Non-Māori teachers showed higher levels of agreement (55%) than kaiako Māori (39%), while kaiako Māori were more likely to express disagreement (22%, compared with just 8% of non-Māori teachers). This may highlight a need for deeper engagement with Māori voices in the development and implementation of curriculum changes.

- Our survey findings provide an important early snapshot of teacher confidence in implementing the updated curriculum before widespread professional development had taken place. Around half of the teachers felt confident in teaching the updated English (50%), and mathematics and statistics (49%) learning areas. This is echoed by teachers' professional learning and development (PLD) needs: 59% of teachers selected "effective teaching of mathematics" and 46% selected "effective teaching of structured literacy" (both ranked among the top three priorities).

- Nearly all teachers (96%) indicated that learning Aotearoa New Zealand's histories is important, and three-quarters (76%) enjoy teaching the curriculum content.

Inclusion

- More teachers felt equipped to teach about cultural diversity and diversity of abilities than religious diversity or diversity in gender identity or sexual orientation. Overall, patterns point to a decline in the proportion of teachers feeling equipped to teach students about diversity, compared with 2019.

- Most teachers were positive about their school culture and support for diversity and inclusion, although fewer (57%) of the teachers felt they had school-wide support to understand and address biases they may have as teachers.

Wellbeing

- Since 2013, teachers' views on job enjoyment, workload, and morale have remained relatively stable. In 2024, job enjoyment continued to be high, with 90% of teachers indicating that they enjoyed their work. Most teachers (75%) indicated that their overall morale was good and that they received the support they needed inside the school to do their job effectively.

- Workload concerns and work-related stress remained, but since 2016 the proportion of teachers working more than 11 additional hours a week has decreased.

- Nearly all teachers (92%) felt confident trying new practices and most (77%) reported having enough autonomy over how they plan, teach, and assess learning. However, just below half (48%) agreed or strongly agreed that teaching time was protected from unnecessary interruptions.
- Most teachers (75%) indicated their school has an effective plan for student wellbeing but only half (54%) said they can access timely support for students with wellbeing needs. Fewer than half agreed or strongly agreed that they had sufficient training to recognise trauma-related responses (48%) or mental health warning signs in students (44%).
- Most teachers were positive about their schools' approaches to supporting positive student behaviour, but the strength of agreement has declined since 2019.
- Most teachers (just over 70%) indicated that school-wide approaches for addressing unwanted behaviours (bullying, racist or discriminatory behaviour) were clear, but fewer (61%) were positive about their effectiveness.
- Compared with 2019, more teachers (82%, compared with 68%) had experienced student behaviour that caused serious disruption to their teaching.

Support and resourcing

- PLD in the past 5 years has grown teachers' ability to use culturally sustaining pedagogies, but challenges remained in accessing specialist advice outside the school when teachers needed it.
- Compared with 2019, fewer teachers reported opportunities to explore the ideas and theory underpinning new approaches (55%, down from 65% in 2019) and engage with teachers in other schools (35%, down from 46% in 2019).
- More teachers than in 2019 said that PLD provided practical help with tikanga Māori, te reo Māori, and teaching ākonga Māori. The increases from 2019 in support to both learn and teach te reo Māori are likely to be attributable to Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori, which was launched the same year. Fewer than half of the teachers reported that PLD had provided practical help for teaching Pacific students.
- The most-selected PLD priorities for teachers are effective teaching of mathematics (chosen by 59% of teachers), using AI (53%), and effective teaching of structured literacy (46%), followed by PLD around providing mental health and wellbeing support (45%).
- Most early-career teachers with less than 3 years' experience felt well supported (73%) and guided into effective practices (89%).

Collaborative relationships

- Compared with 2019, collaborative practices within schools have improved. All five areas of collaboration were rated positively by more than three-quarters of teachers.

Teachers' working experience and future plans

- The most-selected changes to their work that teachers would like were more support staff (selected by 76% of teachers) and smaller class sizes (selected by 70% of teachers), both up from 64% in 2019 and 59% in 2016.
- Perceptions of availability of career progression opportunities has declined. Just under half (49%) of the teachers believed they could progress their careers within their current school, down from 58% in 2019, though this figure remains above the 43% reported in 2016. Just over half (54%) of the teachers felt that career progression opportunities existed for them within education beyond their schools, down from 66% in 2019.

- Interest in leadership development and professional growth has increased since 2019. In the next 5 years, more teachers plan to develop leadership skills (40%, up from 23% in 2019), take on leadership roles with management units (23%, up from 16% in 2019), and increase their level of responsibility within teaching (22%, up from 14% in 2019).
- Just under one-fifth of teachers expressed interest in becoming a principal in the future.

Responding to the research questions

The 2024 National Survey of Primary Schools addresses five research questions on how the education system in Aotearoa New Zealand is progressing over time in: 1) honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi; 2) serving ākonga Māori and 3) serving Pacific students; 4) achieving equitable outcomes for all learners; and 5) supporting the success of everyone within the system, while assessing the impacts of recent policy changes and identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

The 2024 teacher survey shows clear progress in **honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi**, with more schools embedding Treaty principles in values and increasing confidence in te reo Māori use. However, this progress is uneven across school types, and kaiako Māori continue to lead much of this work. Concerns about genuine partnership with Māori in curriculum reform persist. Sustained investment and shared responsibility are essential to ensure lasting, system-wide change.

There is a mixed picture of how well the system is **serving ākonga Māori**. While culturally responsive practice is growing, supported by targeted PLD and increased reo Māori use, equity gaps remain. Variable practices around use of te reo Māori and enactment of Te Tiriti o Waitangi contribute to inconsistent experiences for ākonga Māori. Addressing these disparities is critical to ensuring all ākonga Māori can thrive in culturally sustaining environments.

While the education system is becoming more culturally inclusive overall, **Pacific students** are not yet fully reflected or supported in this progress. Targeted support for teaching Pacific students remains limited. Gaps in addressing religious diversity, bilingualism, and home language literacy highlight a need for more intentional, specific strategies. Advancing equity for Pacific learners requires moving beyond general inclusion to focused and culturally grounded approaches that affirm their unique identities and needs.

In addressing the broader goal of **achieving equitable outcomes for all students**, the survey shows teachers' strong engagement in culturally responsive teaching and social-emotional learning. However, equity is not yet fully realised for students with additional learning and wellbeing needs. Gaps in access to specialist support and limited coverage of contemporary wellbeing issues highlight areas for improvement.

Finally, regarding **support for all people in the system**, teachers enjoy their work and show strong commitment to inclusive practice and high-quality teaching, enabled in part by a high degree of classroom autonomy. Work-related stress remains an issue, particularly for kaiako Māori who are more likely to report workload pressures. This could be linked to additional cultural responsibilities, expectations to support Māori students and whānau, or roles in leading culturally responsive practices within their schools. Support for teachers beyond the classroom remains uneven. Issues such as school-wide support and access to external specialists for students with wellbeing needs, and limited career development opportunities are increasingly pressing. As these challenges accumulate, interest in leadership roles tends to wane with teachers' experience, reflecting growing concerns about workload, sustainability, and the lack of clear pathways for professional growth.

1. He kupu whakataki | Introduction

About the national survey

The purpose of the national survey is to monitor educational trends and policy impacts over time. The intention is to provide a comprehensive national picture of education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

NZCER began regular surveys of English-medium primary schools in 1989 when the Tomorrow's School reforms were implemented. In 2003, a regular survey of English-medium secondary schools was added to the suite. The national surveys have run on a 3-yearly cycle since then[1] (see Figure 1 for the most recent cycles). They have been a core component of NZCER's Te Pae Tawhiti programme, funded through NZCER's Government Grant. The focus of this report is on the 2024 primary school teachers' survey responses.

FIGURE 1   **Timeline of the most recent national surveys**
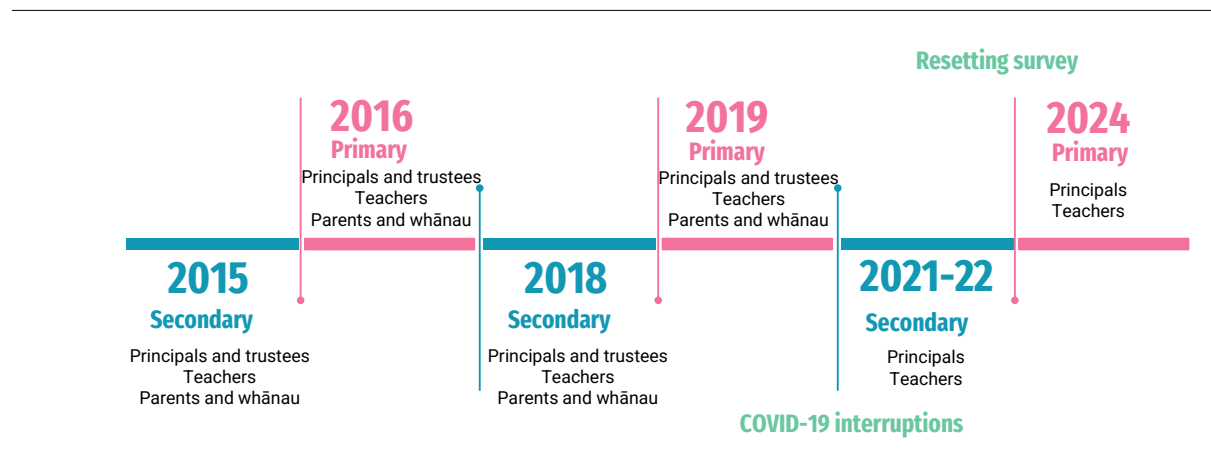
In 2024, we "reset" the survey with the aim of building on the strengths of the earlier national surveys and delivering a refreshed option that continues to give the sector reliable, valid, and useful data and insights. Below is a summary of the key changes from the 2024 reset:

- High-level thinking:
    - o Introduction of a 3-phased reset initiative aimed at refining the national survey from inception to evaluation.
    - o Development of explicit over-arching research questions (as shown below).
- Data collection:
    - o Addition of a new step in data collection to gain feedback about survey domains and topic areas from potential participants and key stakeholders.
    - o Increased use and integration of technology to streamline data collection, data analysis, and reporting processes.

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1   There were two surveys of Early Childhood Education (ECE) services: in 2003–04 and in 2007.

- Survey design:
  - o Introduction of a new framework for the national survey suite (Appendix A), outlining key domains applicable to each respondent group[2] and the collective.
  - o Streamlining of the surveys by removing duplication and implementing branching logic to reduce length.
  - o Incorporation of participants' feedback into the survey design, which also facilitated advance notification of the actual survey to potential participants.
- Reporting:
  - o An individualised school summary for participating schools with more than 10 teacher respondents.

Research questions

The 2024 NZCER National Surveys of Primary Schools have been fully re-designed, with the aim to continue to monitor educational trends and policy impacts in Aotearoa New Zealand over time, by addressing the following research questions:

- Question 1: To what extent and in what ways is the system honouring and enacting with Te Tiriti o Waitangi? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 2: To what extent and in what ways is the system serving ākonga Māori? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 3: To what extent and in what ways is the system serving Pacific students? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 4: To what extent and in what ways is the system designed and supported to achieve equitable outcomes for all students? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 5: To what extent and in what ways are all people in the system supported to succeed? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?

Reading the report

This report is organised into the following sections:

- Section 1 He kupu whakataki | Introduction
- Section 2 He tukanga | Methodology
- Section 3 He kitenga | Findings from six survey domains as listed below, alongside a section on teachers' working experiences and future plans:
  - o Teaching and learning
  - o Curriculum and assessment
  - o Inclusion
  - o Wellbeing
  - o Support and resourcing
  - o Collaborative relationships
- Section 4 He matapaki | Discussion

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2 The framework includes students, parents and whānau, teachers, principals, and board members. We surveyed principals and teachers in 2024 to prioritise resource and minimise the burden on schools.

2. **He tukanga** | Methodology

Participants

The 2024 national survey engaged principals and teachers from a nationally representative sample of all English-medium full primary, contributing, and intermediate schools in Aotearoa New Zealand. This report presents the findings from the teacher survey. The findings from the principal survey are presented in a separate report.

Data collection took place from 16 October to 5 December 2024. Of the 324 schools invited, 49% (n = 158) returned at least one teacher response. After data cleaning, however, we obtained 639 valid teacher responses from 148 schools, resulting in a 46% school response rate. Assuming a 95% critical value, the margin of error for the teacher survey ranged from 3.9% to 7.7%.[3] The responses are nationally representative by School Equity Index (EQI) groups [4] and broadly representative by area and region. Full information about participating teachers' demographics and school characteristics (gender, ethnicity, school EQI group, area, region, and school type) are shown in Appendix B.

Survey design and implementation

Figure 2 provides an overview of the new approach to 2024 survey design and implementation. Further elaboration on each step in survey design and implementation is provided below. Key changes are a move from a predominantly paper-based comprehensive survey to a shorter online survey, and the introduction of "pre-survey" voting to garner priorities from potential participants in schools and stakeholders in educational agencies and organisations.

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3 The sampling design in the teacher survey doesn't permit exact calculation of the margin of error.
4 There are three EQI groups (Fewer, Moderate, and More) as indicated in the diagram from https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/data-services/guidelines/school-equity-index-bands-and-groups

FIGURE 2   **An overview of survey design and implementation**

Stakeholders' & Participants' voices	Survey re-design	Survey implementation	Data analysis
Pre-survey voting	**A comprehensive redesign**	**Online survey**	**Descriptive analysis and modelling**
A voting-based approach to seek views on priorities	• Pre-survey voting • Literature review • Review of other surveys • Consultation internally and with key stakeholders	Survey links were sent out to all participants	Different statistical analysis methods will be used
1	**2**	**3**	**4**

Pre-survey of participants and other stakeholders

We used a pre-survey voting approach to collect feedback from primary and intermediate school principals, teachers, and key educational agencies and organisations. Participants were provided with the potential survey domains and asked to identify the key areas they were particularly interested in. Respondents were also encouraged to share their thoughts on what would motivate them to complete the national survey.

The pre-survey voting enabled us to incorporate sector feedback about current and emerging topics or issues in education into our survey design. Additionally, it allowed us to provide participants with advance notice before the actual survey release.

Survey re-design

In addition to the feedback from pre-survey voting, other inputs were also considered during the survey design stage, including a scan of existing literature and policy documents with strategic priorities for education, recent research on domain topics, internal consultation at NZCER, and further consultation with key educational agencies and organisations.

In developing questions and items for each domain in the framework, we balanced the introduction of new questions with the inclusion of those that provide valuable longitudinal data. We also minimised duplication across the teacher and principal surveys, unless differing perspectives on an issue were essential.

As part of the survey re-design, the response scales for some questions were updated to a 5-point Likert format ("strongly agree", "agree", "neutral", "disagree", and "strongly disagree"). This change was introduced to capture more nuanced perspectives and ensure consistency across the survey. Specific changes to individual items are noted in the Findings section as each question is presented. For items where the scale has changed, caution is advised when interpreting trend data or making direct comparisons with results from previous survey cycles. Observed shifts over time may reflect changes in teachers' perspectives and/or the influence of the revised scale.

Survey implementation

As of July 2024, there were approximately 1,877 English-medium primary schools (including full primary, contributing, and intermediate) in New Zealand, according to Education Counts. A stratified sampling approach was used to draw a nationally representative sample of schools. In October 2024, an email invitation was sent out to principals of 324 sampled English-medium full primary, contributing, and intermediate schools. The email invitation outlined the project's overarching goals and featured a summary paragraph of the results of the pre-survey voting. The email to principals included instructions about engaging their teachers, along with two survey links: one for principals and the other for teachers in their schools.

After sending initial email invitations and reminders, we followed up with phone calls to schools that had not responded. When a principal declined participation, we replaced their school with another demographically similar one and made an attempt to engage them. Additionally, we publicised the survey through the NZCER newsletter and worked with other educational organisations (e.g., NZPF and NZEI) to improve its visibility.

Data analysis

There were four components to our data analysis approach. The focus is on providing survey respondents and key educational agencies and organisations with timely feedback and survey results.

Pre-survey voting results

The pre-survey voting results were analysed and used to inform the survey design. We also compiled and incorporated a concise summary of the results into the invitation email sent to participants.

Individualised school summary

As part of the "reset" initiative, our goal this year was to provide a summary report to each school with more than 10 teacher responses.[5] The school summary was produced based on aggregated data from the teacher survey, with the aim of providing valuable insights for schools and encouraging principals and teachers to participate in the national surveys in the future.

Descriptive analysis

The analysis and reporting of previous national surveys have predominantly relied on descriptive results. This year, we continued to utilise descriptive analysis to illustrate the overarching patterns that emerged. The advantage of descriptive analysis lies in its ability to succinctly summarise and present key findings, providing a clear understanding of the data without necessitating complex statistical techniques.

Hypothesis testing[6] was conducted for closed survey questions to identify statistically significant associations between teachers' views and key school characteristics (e.g., school EQI group, size, type, and region), as well as individual characteristics (e.g., years of teaching experience and ethnicity). Several statistically significant associations were identified, and those deemed meaningful have been included and discussed in this report.

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5   At the end of the teacher survey, consent was obtained from teachers for their data to be included in the school summary. Only one school had more than 10 teachers who consented, and a school summary was provided for that school.
6   Chi-square tests for independence were used throughout the report. False Discovery Rate was applied to account for the inflated Type 1 error rate and to ensure we only report on results that are both statistically significant and meaningful.

When the same items were asked of teachers in the 2019 National Survey of Primary Schools, we report marked changes (i.e., over 5 percentage points). This provides some indication of whether teachers' views have changed over time; however, care is needed when interpreting these differences given our new approach this year (e.g., changes to the survey items and scales). Additionally, the potential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the education sector should be considered when interpreting comparisons with the 2019 findings.

Advanced data analytics techniques

In addition to the descriptive analysis presented in this report, we plan to produce a series of topic-based research briefs, by using advanced modelling techniques to investigate potential relationships across various domains and allow longitudinal analysis. There are also opportunities to confirm the structure of each scale and their variables in the re-designed survey. Previous research outputs using structural equation modelling are accessible from https://www.nzcer.org.nz/research/projects/national-survey.

3. He kitenga | Findings

Te whakaako me te ako | Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning was the largest domain in the 2024 teacher survey. The domain includes longstanding national survey questions that track longer-term trends such as students' learning experiences, teaching English language learners, and teaching students who need additional learning support. It also features new questions designed to capture changes in educational policy and the current context, such as data use, teaching literacy, and use of artificial intelligence (AI). Questions on teachers' use of te reo Māori and educating for climate change have been updated.

Using evidence to improve teaching and learning

In 2019, we asked teachers how well they thought their school analysed student data to improve teaching and learning and improve approaches to student attendance, behaviour, and wellbeing. This year, we developed a new question with a focus on teachers' own use of student data and feedback.

Teachers showed a high commitment to making data-driven decisions in the classroom

Teachers' responses show that use of evidence about and from students is widespread (Figure 3). Nearly all (97%) teachers indicated that they analysed student achievement data to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and make improvements, with 51% strongly agreeing and 46% agreeing. Furthermore, 91% of teachers reported using student feedback to make changes to their teaching, with 39% strongly agreeing and 52% agreeing. Similarly, most (88%) teachers also indicated that they analysed student attendance, behaviour, and wellbeing data to improve their classroom practices, with 38% strongly agreeing and 50% agreeing.

The results from this question indicate that most teachers believe in the value of student data to improve their teaching for better student outcomes.

FIGURE 3   **Teachers' views on their use of evidence to improve teaching and learning**
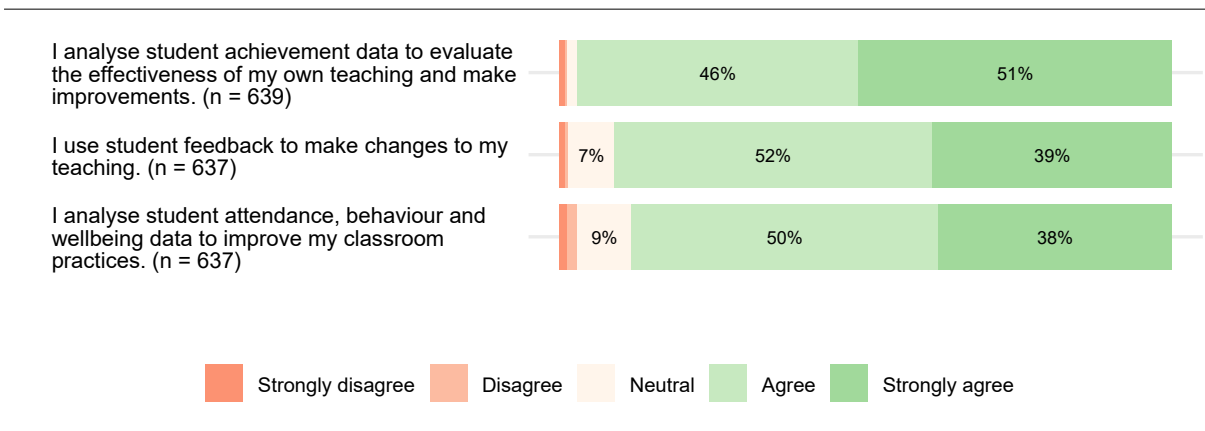
Teaching students with learning support needs

In 2019, teachers were asked about their experiences of teaching students who need learning support—a question also included in the 2024 survey with small wording changes (Figure 4). This year, teachers were encouraged to think about neurodiverse students, students with disability, learning difficulties, physical or mental health, or behaviour issues when answering this question.[7] In addition, the 2024 survey updated the scale with a new "neutral" option.[8]

Half of the teachers reported insufficient support to teach students with learning support needs

Most teachers (77%) agreed or strongly agreed with the item "I do a good job of teaching students with learning support needs in my class". Compared with 2019,[9] there was a decrease in both agreement (86% in 2019) and disagreement (dropping from 12% in 2019 to 3% in 2024). This can likely be attributed to the introduction of the "neutral" option (selected by 20% of the teachers in 2024), as it gave teachers a middle-ground response that wasn't available in 2019. However, there is a meaningful difference in the distribution of "agree" and "strongly agree" responses across these two time periods that could suggest a softening in teachers' confidence that they do a good job in teaching students with learning support needs. In 2024, 17% of teachers selected "strongly agree", down from 33% in 2019 (the proportion selecting "agree" increased to 60%, from 53% in 2019).

Adding to the picture, fewer than half (42%) of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they had "the skills and knowledge to support students with learning support needs who rely on digital technologies to access the curriculum", down from 59% in 2019. Over a third (34%) selected the neutral option that was not available in 2019.

Fewer than a third of teachers (29%) agreed or strongly agreed that they "have sufficient support to teach students with learning support needs in my class", down from 53% in 2019.[10] The proportion indicating disagreement increased to 49% (up from 42% in 2019), with around one-fifth (22%) of teachers selecting "neutral".

FIGURE 4   **Teachers' views about teaching students who need additional learning support**
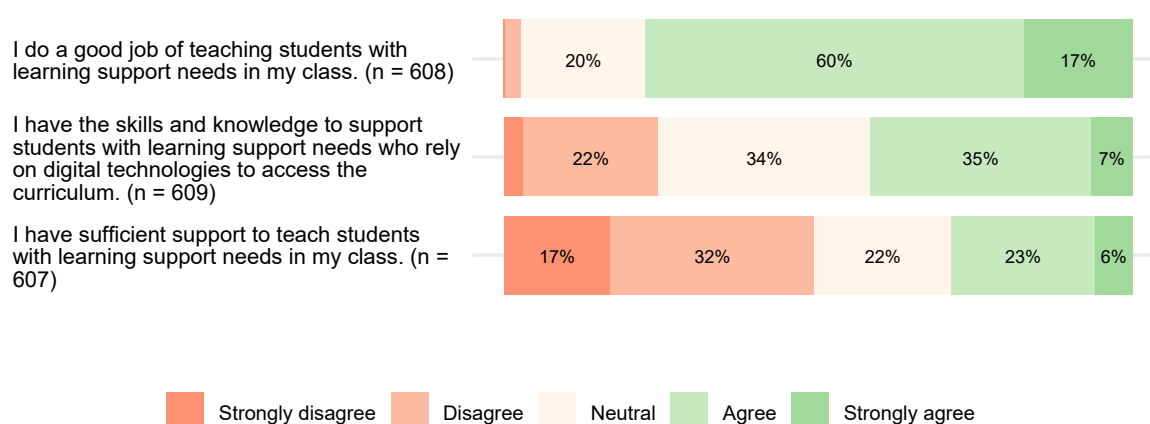
7   In 2019 "neurodiverse students" was not included in the question wording.
8   In 2019, the 5-point scale used for this question was "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", "strongly disagree", and "not applicable".
9   In 2019, this item read "I am confident to teach students with learning support needs in my class".
10 In 2019, the item read "I have the support I need to teach students with learning support needs in my class".

Other findings in this report confirm that teachers want more support to teach students with learning support needs. The most selected thing that teachers would like to change about their work is having more support staff (76% of teachers selected this—see "Teachers' working experiences and future plans" section). Additionally, one-third (35%) of the teachers wanted to have professional PLD on inclusive education and diversity (see "Future PLD needs" under Support and resourcing domain).

A statistically significant relationship was observed by school type and teachers' responses to two of the three items:

- "I have the skills and knowledge to support students with learning support needs who rely on digital technologies to access the curriculum": Agreement was highest among teachers in intermediate schools (72%), and lower among those in full primary schools (41%) and contributing schools (39%). Disagreement followed the opposite trend—most common among teachers in contributing schools (28%), followed by full primary schools (23%) and least common in intermediate schools (11%).
- "I have sufficient support to teach students with learning support needs in my class": A similar pattern emerged where agreement was highest among teachers in intermediate schools (36%), followed by those in contributing schools (31%) and full primary schools (26%). Disagreement was most common among teachers in contributing schools (54%), compared with 48% in full primary schools and only 28% in intermediate.

These findings suggest that teachers in intermediate schools feel better equipped and supported to meet the needs of students requiring additional learning support, particularly when it comes to the use of digital technologies. In contrast, fewer teachers in contributing and full primary schools—especially the former—reported having the skills and knowledge, and more reported dissatisfaction with the level of support they receive.

Teaching for student wellbeing

Recent cycles of the national survey have included questions on student wellbeing, reflecting a growing understanding that a strong wellbeing foundation is essential for students to thrive academically and socially. Some of these items were kept in the 2024 survey and presented in this section, focusing on teachers' perceptions of the integration of wellbeing into teaching and learning, including social and emotional learning and health programmes. These items were updated to use a 5-point response scale, adding a "neutral" option.[11] Findings from questions on other aspects of student wellbeing can be found in the Wellbeing domain later in the report.

Nearly all teachers included social and emotional learning in the classroom

Despite the change to the scale, teachers' views on supporting students' social, emotional, and cultural wellbeing in classroom learning remained consistent between 2019 and 2024. As in 2019, the 2024 survey results (Figure 5) show that nearly all teachers explicitly included strategies and topics that support students to explore and learn about: building and maintaining relationships with their peers[12] (95%); their cultural and social identities (94%); and emotional skills (92%). Notably, while overall patterns remained stable, there was a shift in the strength of agreement for the item "I deliberately teach emotional skills in class", with a larger proportion selecting "strongly agree" (50%,

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11 In 2019, the 4-point scale used for this question was "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree", and "strongly disagree".
12 This item was a combination of the two items asked in the 2019 survey: "I teach strategies in my class that support students to solve personal/relationship problems" and "I use co-operative learning and peer support strategies to help students build friendships".

up from 43% in 2019) and fewer selecting "agree" (42%, down from 49%). The results suggest that these aspects of wellbeing-focused learning continue to be common practice in New Zealand classrooms.

FIGURE 5   **Teachers' views on supporting students' social, emotional, and cultural wellbeing in classroom learning**

I teach strategies in my class that support students to build friendships and solve personal/relationship problems. (n = 580) — 5% | 47% | 48%

I use resources, stories, and values that reflect and support the cultural and social identities of students. (n = 583) — 5% | 57% | 37%

I deliberately teach emotional skills in class (so students learn about themselves and managing their feelings). (n = 583) — 8% | 42% | 50%

Strongly disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly agree
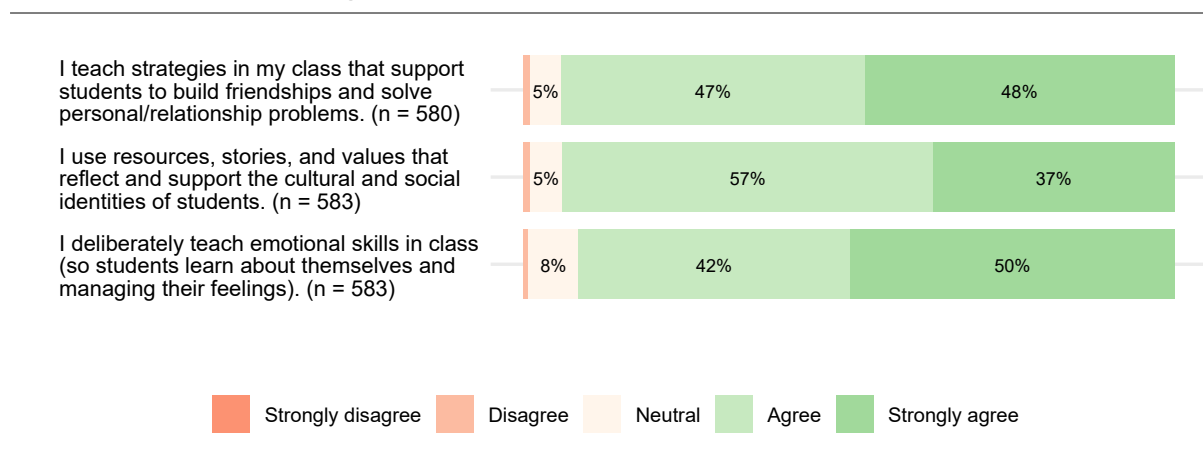
Nearly all teachers ensured opportunities for students to be physically active, but fewer provided learning opportunities about healthy eating

Nearly all (90%) teachers indicated that they "make sure students have lots of opportunities to be physically active during the day" (Figure 6). The overall agreement was consistent with 2019, although slightly fewer teachers selected "strongly agree" (38% in 2024, down from 44% in 2019).

However, just over half (59%, down from 76% in 2019) of the teachers agreed (43%, down from 55% in 2019) or strongly agreed (16%, down from 21% in 2019) that they "make sure students have lots of opportunities to learn about healthy eating". There was also a decline in the overall disagreement (10%, down from 22% in 2019), mainly driven by a decrease of 11% in "disagree". The drop in both agreement and disagreement, particularly in the moderate ("agree" and "disagree") responses, is likely influenced by the introduction of the "neutral" option, which was selected by 30% of the teachers in 2024.

A statistically significant relationship was observed by school type and teachers' responses to the item "learn about healthy eating (e.g., making shared healthy lunches)". Many teachers in contributing schools (62%) and full primary schools (61%) agreed or strongly agreed that they "make sure students have lots of opportunities to learn about healthy eating", compared with just 31% in intermediate schools. It appears that learning about healthy eating is more commonly emphasised in younger year levels, which are the focus of contributing and full primary schools. In contrast, intermediate schools may place less focus on this area—possibly due to a shift in curriculum priorities at this level or assumptions that students have already developed these foundational habits.

FIGURE 6   **Teachers' views on opportunities to support students' physical wellbeing**
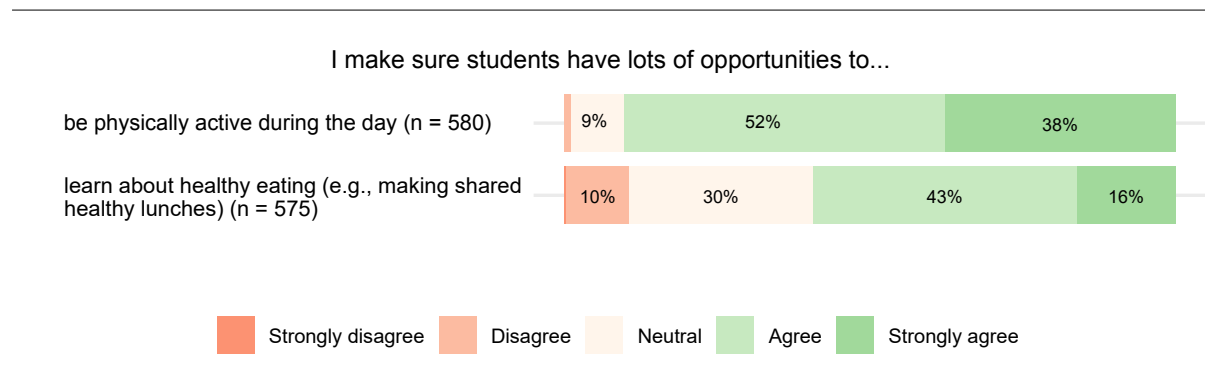
I make sure students have lots of opportunities to...

be physically active during the day (n = 580)
9% | 52% | 38%

learn about healthy eating (e.g., making shared healthy lunches) (n = 575)
10% | 30% | 43% | 16%

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree □ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

Teachers had mixed views on whether their health programme included the impact of social media, healthy use of digital devices, and gender identity

As shown in Figure 7, a notable proportion of teachers selected the new "neutral" option when asked how their health programme enabled students to discuss areas such as "the impact of social media on wellbeing and the healthy use of digital devices" (28%), and "gender identity and consent" (42%).

This shift towards neutrality was accompanied by a drop in both agreement and disagreement levels. For the item "the impact of social media on wellbeing and the healthy use of digital devices", agreement dropped from 66% in 2019 to 57% in 2024, while disagreement rates fell from 29% in 2019 to 15% in 2024. Notably, the decrease was mainly driven by decreases in moderate responses ("agree" dropped from 47% to 40%, and "disagree" dropped from 25% to 12%), while the proportions of "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" remained more stable, suggesting that the introduction of a "neutral" response option likely absorbed responses from teachers with more moderate views.

For the item on "gender identity and consent", while overall agreement remained relatively stable across 2 years, disagreement dropped sharply from 57% to 27%. Again, this decrease was primarily driven by the drop in "disagree" (from 46% to 20%) rather than "strongly disagree", which may be attributed to the introduction of a "neutral" response option.

FIGURE 7   **Teachers' views about aspects of their health programme**
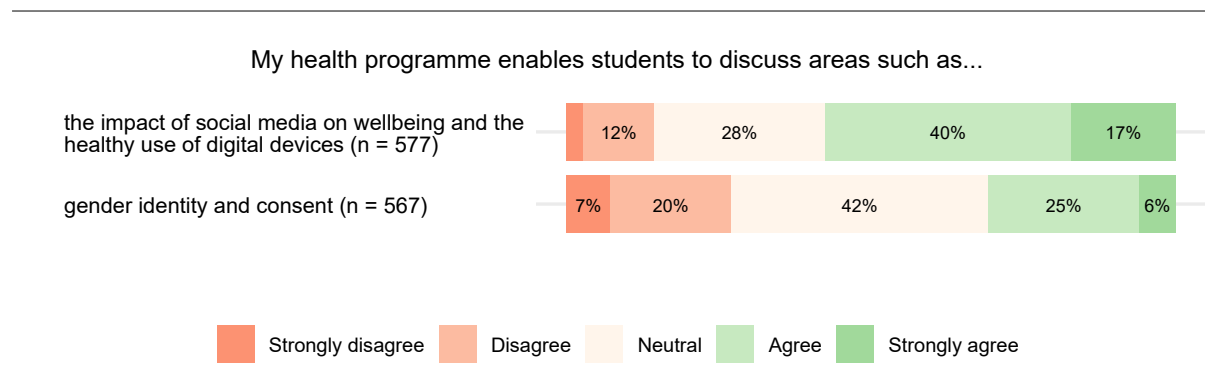
My health programme enables students to discuss areas such as...

the impact of social media on wellbeing and the healthy use of digital devices (n = 577)
12% | 28% | 40% | 17%

gender identity and consent (n = 567)
7% | 20% | 42% | 25% | 6%

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree □ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' responses to both items in Figure 7. Teachers in intermediate schools were more likely to agree or strongly agree that their health programme enables students to discuss areas such as "the impact of social media on wellbeing and the healthy use of digital devices" (94%) and "gender identity and consent" (66%), compared with those in full primary schools (66% and 31%, respectively) and contributing schools (45% and 26%, respectively). These results suggest that intermediate schools, which serve older students, are more likely to engage with complex and socially relevant health topics, reflecting both the developmental readiness of their students and curriculum priorities at this level. In contrast, lower agreement among teachers in full primary and contributing schools may indicate less emphasis on these topics for younger students, or teachers' need for further support and resources to confidently address them.

However, the idea that only teachers of older students should address these topics is increasingly being challenged. Research from Growing Up in New Zealand[13] shows that children are exposed to digital devices from as early as age 2. The past Ministry of Education's Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) guidelines (Ministry of Education, 2020)[14] recommended introducing concepts such as consent in early primary schools. This suggests that earlier and more consistent integration of these topics across school types may be both necessary and beneficial.

Adding to the picture, findings from the Inclusion domain in this report show that only 28% of teachers indicated they had the knowledge and resources to teach about diversity in gender identity or sexual orientation. A further 38% selected "neutral", and 34% disagreed or strongly disagreed, indicating widespread uncertainty and a potential lack of preparedness among educators.

Teaching literacy

There is a clear focus on teaching literacy in the updated New Zealand Curriculum, reflecting a renewed national-level interest in ensuring the literacy learning success of all students in New Zealand (Ministry of Education, 2024c). In response, the 2024 survey introduced a new question on how often teachers provide explicit and intentional teaching across different aspects of literacy. In addition, teachers were also asked about the extent to which they teach literacy in ways that support and sustain students' cultures and home languages.

Most teachers adopted explicit and intentional practices in the teaching of literacy either daily or several times a week

As shown in Figure 8, most of these literacy areas were explicitly and intentionally taught by teachers at least several times a week in most classrooms.

Decoding and reading comprehension are critical elements in the development of literacy. According to the seminal model, *The Simple View of Reading* (Hoover & Gough, 1990), comprehension is the product of two key processes: decoding (word recognition) and linguistic comprehension (the ability to understand spoken language). Figure 8 shows that most teachers (72%) provide daily explicit and intentional teaching of decoding skills, with a further fifth (19%) providing this teaching several times a week. Two-thirds (66%) of the teachers indicated teaching reading comprehension daily, with just under one-third (29%) providing this teaching several times a week. It is important to note that

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13 https://www.growingup.co.nz/key-findings
14 In early 2025, the Ministry of Education removed their 2020 Relationship and Sexuality Education guidelines. As an interim measure, these guidelines will be replaced by a draft framework while the Health and PE learning area is revised as part of a wider curriculum refresh programme. See https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/relationships-sexuality-education-refresh

the balance between decoding and comprehension instruction naturally shifts across year levels. As students become more fluent readers, decoding becomes more automatic, and instructional emphasis tends to shift toward supporting comprehension of increasingly complex, academic, and abstract texts (Castles et al., 2018). This developmental progression is consistent with the patterns observed in Table 1, which highlights variations in instructional focus by school type.

Around two-thirds (68%) of the teachers also provide explicit and intentional teaching of the **ideation skills of writing (i.e., text composition, idea generation)** daily, with another 27% providing this several times a week. The frequency of teaching **transcription skills (the items about spelling, structure of sentences, and handwriting)** was lower, although most teachers (73%–86%) still reported teaching these at least several times a week.

Vocabulary knowledge and oral language skill are both essential to success in writing and reading—understanding vocabulary underpins understanding of extended text, and oral language competency predicts later reading comprehension (Castles et al., 2018). Most of the teachers reported explicitly teaching vocabulary (88%) and oral language (74%) at least several times a week.

FIGURE 8   **Explicit and intentional teaching in relation to different aspects of literacy**
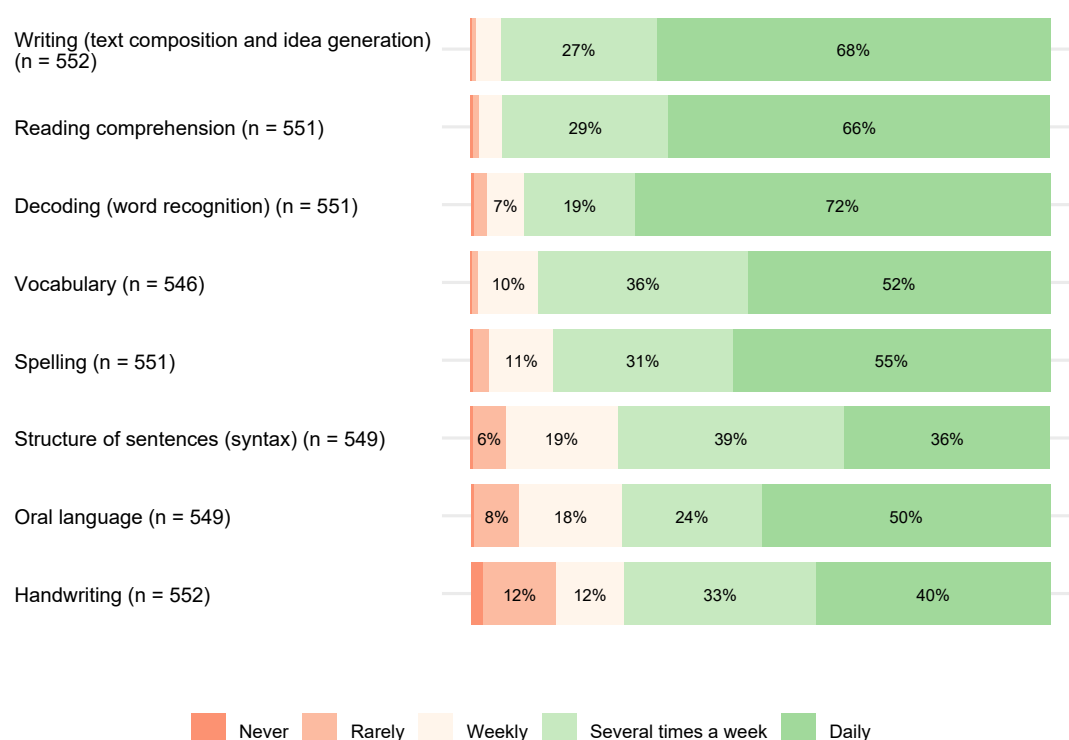
A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' reported frequency of instruction across nearly all literacy areas in Figure 8, except for "structure of sentences". Table 1 presents the areas where differences across school types were statistically significant. Explicit and intentional teaching was more commonly reported (at least several times a week) by teachers in contributing and full primary schools, especially for oral language, decoding, spelling and handwriting. In contrast, teachers in intermediate schools were less likely to report frequent instruction in these

areas. These findings reflect that foundational literacy skills receive greater instructional attention in the earlier years of schooling, while in intermediate schools, the focus may shift toward broader curriculum content or assume that students have already mastered these basic skills.

TABLE 1 **Literacy teaching patterns by school type**

Literacy area	School type	Never%	Rarely %	Weekly %	Several times a week %	Daily %
Writing (text composition and idea generation)	Contributing	0	2	4	23	71
	Full primary	0	0	5	29	66
	Intermediate	3	0	0	43	53
Reading comprehension	Contributing	0	1	3	23	73
	Full primary	0	1	5	32	62
	Intermediate	3	3	3	47	43
Decoding (word recognition)	Contributing	1	1	5	13	80
	Full primary	0	1	7	23	69
	Intermediate	3	20	17	33	27
Vocabulary	Contributing	0	2	9	33	57
	Full primary	0	1	10	38	52
	Intermediate	3	0	27	50	20
Spelling	Contributing	0	2	8	30	59
	Full primary	0	2	11	32	55
	Intermediate	3	17	30	30	20
Oral language	Contributing	0	4	15	23	57
	Full primary	1	10	19	24	46
	Intermediate	0	24	24	34	17
Handwriting	Contributing	1	9	11	37	43
	Full primary	2	12	12	33	41
	Intermediate	17	47	17	7	13

Most teachers supported cultural diversity through literacy, but greater understanding is needed to effectively support students' home languages

The other new question in this section asked teachers how they teach literacy in ways that support and sustain students' cultures and home languages (Figure 9).

Most teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they provide opportunities for students to learn

about diversity and cultures through reading and writing (85%) and teach literacy in a way that is culturally sustaining for all students (75%). However, a notable proportion selected "neutral" for both statements (13% and 23%, respectively). This may suggest uncertainty for this group of teachers, or that they teach literacy in a way that is culturally sustaining for *some but not all students.*

Fewer than half (45%) of the teachers reported understanding how to support their students' home languages in their literacy programme, with only 9% strongly agreeing and a further 37% selecting "neutral". While English remains the primary language of instruction in New Zealand classrooms, nearly 30% of New Zealanders are born overseas and more than 150 different languages are spoken across the country (Stats NZ, 2024.). These figures highlight the need to equip teachers with the knowledge and tools to support students' home languages as part of effective literacy instruction. This need is further underscored by the findings in the "Teaching English language learners" section, where 70% of teachers reported teaching students who are learning English as an additional language (and need specialised support with English), yet only 57% felt they had the skills and knowledge to cater for the English language learners in their class, and 46% felt they had access to sufficient support to help their English language learners.

FIGURE 9   **Teachers' views on their literacy teaching**
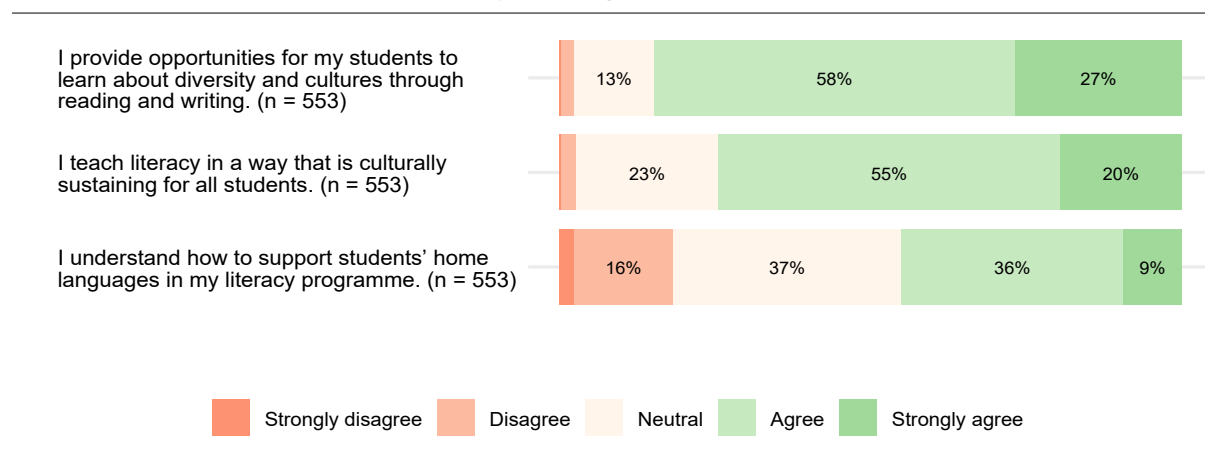
Students' learning experiences

The national survey has included a bank of items about students' learning experiences since 2010. In 2024, we continued to ask teachers "How often do students have these learning experiences in your class?" A minor change was made to the response scale, with the previous option "most of the time" replaced by "very often". This year, we reviewed and updated the item list against the teaching guidance in the updated New Zealand Curriculum[15] which is underpinned by the principles of the science of learning and explicit teaching.

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15 We used the draft English in the New Zealand Curriculum Years 0– 6 that was released in August 2024, just before the national survey was implemented.

Nearly all teachers frequently provided opportunities for students to share prior knowledge, practise new learning, and encounter new learning through a gradual release of responsibility

After reviewing this question against the teaching guidance in the updated New Zealand Curriculum, we added items about how often teachers provide experiences for students to: 1) share prior knowledge; 2) practise and consolidate new learning; and 3) encounter new learning through the gradual release of responsibility. As shown in Figure 10, while all the learning experiences occurred at least "sometimes" in almost all teachers' classes, these three learning experiences were provided more frequently by teachers than other items. Nearly all teachers (91%–98%) indicated providing these experiences "very often" or "quite often", with all reporting they offer them at least "sometimes".

Compared to previous years, four experiences are happening more frequently in 2024, with a higher proportion of teachers reporting that they provided them at least "quite often":

- "Work together to solve problems or suggest solutions" (86%, up from 81% in 2019), with a particularly notable increase in those selecting "very often" (40%, up from 27% in 2019).
- "Learn from taking risk or experiments that do not succeed" (82%, up from 67% in 2019), with a particularly notable increase in those selecting "very often" (35%, up from 20% in 2019).
- "Explore and challenge their current understandings" (81%, up from 71% in 2019) with a particularly notable increase in those selecting "very often" (30%, up from 18% in 2019).
- "Discuss different ways of looking at things and worldviews"[16] (78%, up from 68% in 2019), with a particularly notable increase in those selecting "very often" (31%, up from 21% in 2019).

Consistent with 2019, most teachers reported providing opportunities either "quite often" or "very often" for students to "think and talk about how they are learning" (85%) and to "take part in hands-on/practical activities" (84%).

Compared to the more frequent learning experiences noted above, some activities remain less common, although there has been a modest increase in the proportion of teachers selecting "very often" in 2024. Just over half of the teachers (53%, similar to 2019) reported that they gave students opportunities to work on individual projects or inquiries either "quite often" (33%) or "very often" (20%, up from 13% in 2019), while 6% reported never offering this. Meanwhile, only 47% of teachers (similar to 2019) reported giving students opportunities to work together on a project or activity aimed to make a difference to their environment or community either "quite often" (29%) or "very often" (18%, up from 12% in 2019), with 7% rarely providing such opportunities.

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16 In 2019, this item read "Discuss different ways of looking at things/different interpretations".

FIGURE 10 **Teachers' views on frequency of students' learning experiences**

Opportunities to…

share prior knowledge (n = 540)	34%	64%
practise, review, and consolidate new learning (n = 537)	39%	56%
encounter new learning through the gradual release of responsibility (I do, we do, you do) (n = 540)	8% / 37%	54%
work together to solve problems or suggest solutions (n = 538)	14% / 46%	40%
think and talk about how they are learning (n = 537)	14% / 45%	40%
take part in hands-on/practical activities (n = 539)	16% / 44%	40%
learn from taking risks or experiments that do not succeed (n = 538)	17% / 47%	35%
explore and challenge their current understandings (n = 537)	19% / 51%	30%
discuss different ways of looking at things and worldviews (n = 537)	21% / 47%	31%
direct their own learning pace or content (n = 538)	36% / 40%	20%
work on individual projects or inquiries (n = 538)	6% / 40% / 33%	20%
work together on a project/activity that aims to make a difference to their class/school/local environment or community (n = 537)	7% / 47% / 29%	18%

Almost never/never   Sometimes   Quite often   Very often

A statistically significant relationship also emerged between school type and teachers' responses to the item "take part in hands-on/practical activities". Teachers in contributing schools were more likely to report providing this opportunity "very often" (47%) than those in full primary schools (35%) and intermediate schools (23%). Meanwhile, "quite often" responses were more common in intermediate schools (61%) than full primary schools (46%) and contributing schools (40%).

Teachers' use of te reo Māori with their students

When we last surveyed teachers in 2019, *Te Ahu o te Reo Māori,* a professional learning programme to strengthen teachers' reo Māori capabilities, was newly introduced. It aimed to normalise the use of te reo Māori every day (Ministry of Education, 2024b). In September 2024, the Government announced this programme would cease, with funding redirected toward mathematics resources (Ministry of Education, 2024d).

In 2024, we asked teachers to describe their current level of use of te reo Māori with their students by selecting one of three levels: "he kākano (emerging/limited)", "he whanake (developing)", and "panekiretanga (strong/confident)", along with more detailed descriptors under each level. This differs from 2019, when teachers selected from multiple items across different levels, which makes direct comparisons between 2019 and 2024 data difficult. However, tentative comparisons are made and reported below where notable shifts are evident.

Most teachers identified as "he kākano" or "he whanake" level, with kaiako Māori more likely to use te reo Māori in classrooms with high proficiency

Of the 534 teachers who responded to this question, 31% (n = 167) identified their use of te reo Māori as "he kākano (emerging/limited)", 64% (n = 342) as "he whanake (developing)", and only 5% (n = 25) as "panekiretanga (strong/confident)". Table 2 presents an overall pattern of teachers' level of use, showing a statistically significant trend: kaiako Māori are more likely to use te reo Māori in their classrooms at higher proficiency levels. Only 13% of kaiako Māori selected "he kākano (emerging)", compared with 34% of non-Māori teachers. Most kaiako Māori (70%) reported being at the "he whanake (developing)" level, slightly higher than the 63% of non-Māori teachers. Finally, 17% of kaiako Māori selected "panekiretanga (strong/confident)", compared with 3% of non-Māori teachers.

TABLE 2   **Teachers' current level of use of te reo Māori with their students**

	Total respondents (n = 534)	Kaiako Māori (n = 60)	Non-Māori teachers (n = 474)
"He kākano (emerging/limited)"	167 (31%)	8 (13%)	159 (34%)
"He whanake (developing)"	342 (64%)	42 (70%)	300 (63%)
"Panekiretanga (strong/confident)"	25 (5%)	10 (17%)	15 (3%)

As shown in Table 3 to Table 5, each proficiency level included a set of statements for respondents to choose from, except for one statement ("My students help me practise and strengthen my reo Māori so we learn together") which was offered across all three levels. This reflects the importance of reciprocal learning (ako) as a key factor in strengthening teachers' te reo Māori. This statement was selected by 43% of all teachers, consistent with the 2019 result (41%). The following sections provide more detail on how teachers are using te reo Māori within each proficiency level.

Most teachers at "he kākano" level reported using a few Māori words or phrases, and/or incorporating te reo Māori in class karakia and waiata

Among teachers who selected "he kākano" (emerging or limited use of te reo Māori, n = 167), most of them (88%) reported using a few Māori words or phrases (such as greetings and farewells) and/or incorporating te reo Māori in class karakia and waiata (Table 3). However, a small proportion (6%, n = 10) lack confidence in using Māori words or phrases and avoid them when possible. This group represents around 2% of all teachers who responded to the question on te reo Māori use, a similar picture as in 2019.

TABLE 3   **Teachers' use of te reo Māori who are at the "he kākano (emerging/limited)" level (n = 167)**

	Count	Percentage
I use a few Māori words or phrases (e.g., greetings and farewells) and/or use reo Māori for class karakia and waiata.	146	88
My students help me practise and strengthen my reo Māori so we learn together.	36	22
I'm not confident using Māori words or phrases so I don't if I can avoid it.	10	6

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

More teachers were confident in using short phrases and sentences in te reo Māori than in 2019

Nearly two-thirds of the teachers (64%, n = 342) reported using te reo Māori at a "he whanake (developing)" level, with 339 of them continuing to answer the follow-up question describing their use more specifically. As shown in Table 4, nearly all teachers (90%) at the "he whanake (developing)" level use te reo Māori for classroom instructions or directions. Additionally, more than half (54%) of the teachers at this level explicitly teach reo Māori words, phrases, and sentence structures.

Confidence in using te reo Māori beyond basic greetings appears to have grown since 2019. Of those at the "he whanake (developing)" level, 142 teachers (42%) reported confidently using phrases and short sentences, other than instructions, in their classes. This group represents around 27% of all teachers who responded to the question on te reo Māori use, an increase from 16% in 2019.

TABLE 4   **Teachers' use of te reo Māori who are at the "he whanake (developing)" level (n = 339)**

	Count	Percentage
I use te reo Māori to give instructions or directions (e.g., E noho, E tū).	304	90
I explicitly teach students te reo Māori words, phrases, and sentence structures.	183	54
My students help me practise and strengthen my reo Māori so we learn together.	178	53
I confidently use reo Māori phrases and short sentences, other than instructions, in my class (e.g., Ka wani kē! Kei te aha koe āpōpō? Nō wai ēnei tōkena?).	142	42

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

A statistically significant relationship was also observed by teachers' ethnicity and their selection of the item "I confidently use reo Māori phrases and short sentences, other than instructions, in my class (e.g., Ka wani kē! Kei te aha koe āpōpō? Nō wai ēnei tōkena?)". Just over a third (39%) of non-Māori teachers at the "he whanake (developing)" level chose this item, compared with nearly two-thirds (64%) kaiako Māori.

Many teachers at the "panekiretanga (strong/confident)" level led short lessons or discussions entirely in te reo Māori

Among the 25 teachers who identified as using te reo Māori at the "panekiretanga (strong/confident)" level, 15 (60%) reported being able to lead short lessons or discussions in class using te reo Māori only. A very small proportion of teacher respondents "teach some learning areas using te reo Māori only" (8%, n = 2) or "teach across the curriculum in te reo Māori only" (8%, n = 2).

TABLE 5   **Teachers' use of te reo Māori who are at the "panekiretanga (strong/confident)" level (n = 25)**

	Count	Percentage
I lead short lessons or discussions in class using te reo Māori only.	15	60
My students help me practise and strengthen my reo Māori so we learn together.	13	52
I teach some learning areas using te reo Māori only.	2	8
I teach across the curriculum in te reo Māori only.	2	8

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

Teaching English language learners

Students who speak English as a second or additional language represent a growing population in Aotearoa New Zealand schools. The number of students receiving ESOL (English for speakers of other languages) funding has continued to rise over time. ESOL funding statistics 2024 period 2[17] show that 83,397 students in 1,747 schools were funded in late September 2024, with an additional 15,069 students compared to period 2, 2023. Recognising this growth, the NZCER national survey has included questions about support for English language learners since 2019.

Most teachers taught students who are learning English as an additional language

Most (70%) teachers indicated that they teach students who are learning English as an additional language and need specialised support, consistent with 2019 findings.[18]

A statistically significant relationship was observed between whether teachers taught students with English as an additional language and a school's EQI. Teachers in schools with fewer socioeconomic challenges were more likely to teach English language learners: 78% of teachers in schools with fewer challenges reported teaching students who are learning English as an additional language and require specialised support with English, compared with 67% of teachers in schools with moderate challenges and 57% in schools with more socioeconomic challenges. Statistically significant relationships were also observed by school location. Teachers in urban areas (75%) were more likely than those in rural schools (44%) to report working with these students.

Over half of the teachers were confident about catering for English language learners, but a third said they did not have access to sufficient support for them

We asked teachers who reported teaching English language learners about their own skills and knowledge to cater for those learners and their access to sufficient support. These were the same items asked in 2019, although the scale changed from 4 points to 5 points in 2024, with the addition of a "neutral" option.

Over half (57%, down from 72% in 2019) of these teachers felt they had the skills and knowledge to cater for the English language learners in their class. While the proportion choosing "strongly agree" remained stable (10% in 2024, compared with 11% in 2019), those "agreeing" declined from 61% to 47%. There was also a slight decrease in disagreement, falling from 24% to 16%, with a more notable drop in "disagree" (from 21% to 14%) than "strongly disagree". It is likely that the presence of the new "neutral" response choice has led to more teachers choosing this option.

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17 https://www.education.govt.nz/bulletins/esol-migrant-refugee-news/01-11-24
18 In 2019, teachers were asked to respond with "yes, many", "yes, some", or "no" to this question. In 2024, the options to this question were simplified to "yes" or "no".

A similar pattern appeared regarding access to support. A smaller proportion (46%, down from 64% in 2019) felt they had access to sufficient support to help their English language learners, with 36% agreeing (down from 51% in 2019) and 10% strongly agreeing (similar to 13% in 2019). The disagreement remains relatively stable, with a further 25% choosing "neutral".

A statistically significant relationship was also observed by teachers' ethnicity and their responses to the item "I have the skills and knowledge to cater for the English language learners in my class". Non-Māori teachers reported slightly higher levels of agreement (57%), compared to kaiako Māori (51%). In contrast, kaiako Māori were more likely to express disagreement (27%, with 15% disagreeing and 12% strongly disagreeing), compared to 15% disagreement (with only 1% strongly disagreeing) among non-Māori teachers. These findings suggest that kaiako Māori may feel less confident or less supported in meeting the needs of English language learners, potentially indicating gaps in professional learning opportunities or systemic support tailored to their specific teaching contexts.

FIGURE 11 **Teachers' views about teaching English language learners**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I have the skills and knowledge to cater for the English language learners in my class. (n = 369)		14%	27%	47%	10%
I have access to sufficient support to help my English language learners. (n = 368)	7%	23%	25%	36%	10%
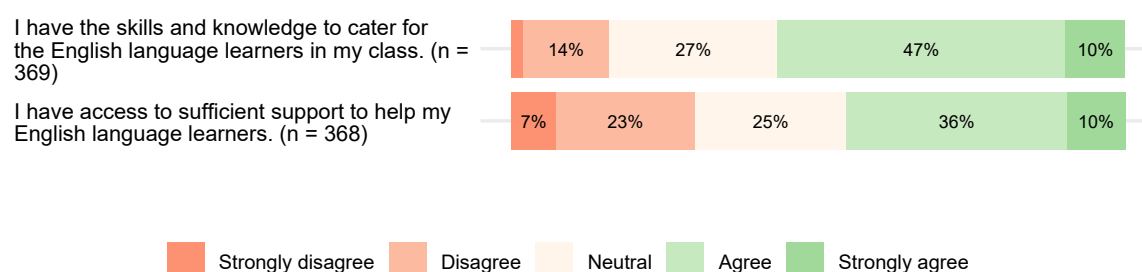
Teachers' use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

This is the first time AI-related questions have been included in NZCER's national surveys. While AI, particularly ChatGPT, is increasingly recognised as a valuable support tool in primary education (Ashby, 2024), research is needed to better understand how teachers are using it, along with the relevant challenges and opportunities (Filiz et al., 2025). Therefore, the 2024 national survey explored teachers' use of AI tools, the main barriers they face, their views on AI in teaching and learning and whether they had concerns about student use of AI. These insights help shape a clearer picture of AI adoption in primary schools.

Nearly half of the teachers used AI tools in their teaching

Of the 527 teachers who responded to the question asking whether they were currently integrating AI tools into their teaching practices, nearly half (46%) reported that they used AI tools in their teaching. As shown below, the survey then branched based on teachers' response to their AI use: those using AI were asked how they used it in their teaching (Table 6), while those not using AI were asked about barriers to use (Table 7). All teachers were then asked about their views on AI in teaching and learnings (Figure 12).

The most common use of AI was to help teachers develop learning materials

Among teachers who used AI in their teaching practice (n = 244), the most common use of AI was developing learning materials (85%), followed by preparing for teaching areas where their understanding of the curriculum needs support (57%), and streamlining administrative tasks (52%).

The focus on lesson planning and administration tasks suggests teachers prioritise AI for efficiency and workload reduction.

Fewer teachers used AI to foster innovation and creativity in student projects (40% of those who use AI chose this item). Additionally, 12% of teachers reported using AI for other purposes that included assessment, report writing, image generation, and data analysis. These varied applications suggest that some teachers are experimenting with AI beyond the most common uses.

TABLE 6   **Use of the AI tools in teaching practice (n = 244)**

	Count	Percentage
Help me develop learning materials	207	85
Help me prepare for teaching areas where my understanding of the curriculum needs support	138	57
Streamline administrative tasks	126	52
Foster innovation and creativity in student projects	98	40
Others (please describe)	30	12

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' responses to the items "Foster innovation and creativity in student projects" and "Help me prepare for teaching areas where my understanding of the curriculum needs support". Teachers from contributing schools were less likely to use AI to "foster innovation and creativity in student projects" (10%) or help them "prepare for teaching areas" (17%), while the proportion increased to 20% and 24% in full primary schools and 19% and 42% in intermediate schools.

Lack of AI knowledge and training was the biggest barrier preventing teachers from integrating AI into their practice

Teachers who had not integrated AI into their practice (n = 283) reflected on the challenges they face. As shown in Table 7, the most common barrier reported by teachers was a lack of knowledge or training on AI tools (74%), highlighting a clear need for professional development in this area. This aligns with findings in Figure 38 (see "Future PLD needs" section under Support and resourcing domain), where AI was identified as one of the top areas for future PLD.

The second most common barrier was a preference for traditional teaching methods (40%). Data privacy and security concerns were shared by over a third of respondents (36%), indicating the need for clearer policies on AI and data security. The concerns of poor governance and the lack of specialised guidelines for the ethical deployment of AI tools has been widely recognised across many professional settings, including education sectors (Ghimire & Edwards, 2024).

Nearly a third of non-AI-using teachers (31%) reported limited access to AI resources or tools, potentially reflecting funding constraints, insufficient school investment, or unequal access to digital infrastructure. Scepticism about AI's effectiveness in education (27%) reinforces the need for targeted support and guidance.

Additionally, 13% of respondents (n = 37) commented under the "other" category to explain main barriers to integrating AI into their teaching practice. One recurring theme was the lack of school support or enabling policy (e.g., "not encouraged by leadership", "my school doesn't allow it yet"), along with constraints such as "school computer blocking access to them" or the absence of "firm guidelines about how/when to use/teach them". Some teachers reported insufficient time to learn (e.g., "not enough time" or "on the journey to start using AI"), with the need for PLD such as "time to upskill myself in this (or any) area" and "I am going to a course tomorrow". There were also concerns about student age and developmental appropriateness (e.g., "[I] teach juniors so want to move away from technology at this age" and "age of students is not appropriate for this"). Access to devices and classroom infrastructure was another constraint teachers reported (e.g., "do not have/own Chromebook devices" or "we intentionally have very limited IT use in the classroom. Only the teacher does"). Lastly, a small group of teachers expressed ethical or pedagogical reservations about AI use in education (e.g., "may limit creativeness, too 'easy'", "moral questions of handing it over to students in class setting").

TABLE 7   **Main barriers to integrating AI tools into teaching practice (n = 283)**

	Count	Percentage
Lack of knowledge or training on AI tools	210	74
Preference for traditional teaching methods	113	40
Concerns about data privacy and security	101	36
Limited access to AI resources or tools	87	31
Scepticism about the effectiveness of AI in education	77	27
Others (please describe)	37	13

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

While many teachers were positive about AI, uncertainty remained, especially among those without experience

All teachers were then asked about their perspectives on AI in teaching and learning (Figure 12). Half (50%) expressed enthusiasm about the future of generative AI in education, while only 11% held a negative view. A similar trend was observed in the 2024 National Survey of Primary School Principals, suggesting the generally positive outlook on AI's potential in education. However, 39% of teachers selected "neutral", indicating uncertainty or a lack of familiarity with AI. Nearly two-thirds (65%) of those who selected "neutral" were teachers who had not yet integrated AI into their teaching. This indicates that a lack of direct experience with AI may contribute to uncertainty.

When asked about students' use of generative AI, 26% of teachers expressed concern that it may undermine their learning, while 35% indicated that they did not have this concern. Again, 39% responded neutrally, reflecting a degree of uncertainty. These findings underline the need for more discussions, resources, and professional learning opportunities to help teachers develop informed perspectives and greater confidence in navigating AI's role in primary education.

FIGURE 12 **Teachers' views about AI in teaching and learning**

I am enthusiastic about the future of generative AI in education. (n = 519)

| 8% | 39% | 37% | 13% |

■ Strongly disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly agree

I am concerned that students in my class are using generative AI in ways that undermine their learning. (n = 517)

| 13% | 22% | 39% | 21% | 5% |

■ Strongly disagree   ■ Disagree   ■ Neutral   ■ Agree   ■ Strongly agree
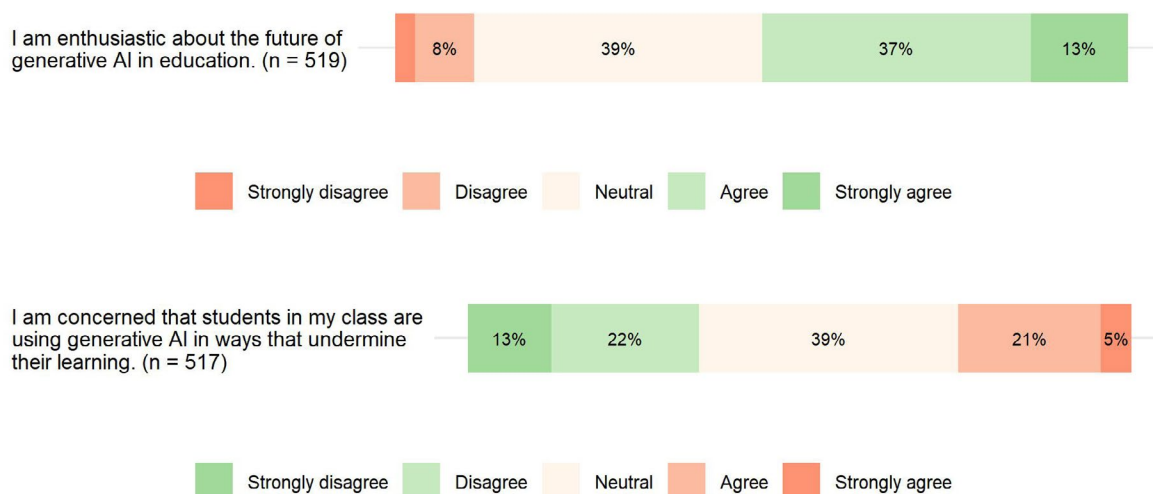
Education for a changing climate

In both the 2019 and 2024 surveys, teachers were asked about the anticipated impact of climate change on the place and community where their school is located within their students' lifetimes. Teachers' views on climate and sustainability learning and teaching practices were also explored in both surveys, with a newly introduced "neutral" response option in 2024. Additionally, the 2024 survey included new questions asking teachers whether their school community had been experiencing the impacts of climate change, and how confident they were in addressing climate change issues in their classroom programmes.

More than two-thirds of teachers expected moderate to major climate impacts in their students' lifetimes

In 2024, 67% of teachers believed that climate change would have either moderate (40%) or major (27%) impacts on the place and community where their school is located, within students' lifetimes (Figure 13). This represents a noticeable decline from the 2019 survey, in which 79% of teachers and principals[19] expected moderate impacts (25%) or major impacts (54%, Bolstad, 2020). This shift may indicate a softening in educators' perceptions of local climate risk over time. However, while global studies show that public perceptions and attitudes to climate change can fluctuate, research in Aotearoa New Zealand suggests a relatively steady baseline of concern (e.g., IPSOS, 2023).

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19 When this question was asked in 2019, it was asked of both teachers and principals, and we combined their responses in our reporting.

FIGURE 13 **Teachers' views of climate change impact (n = 515)**
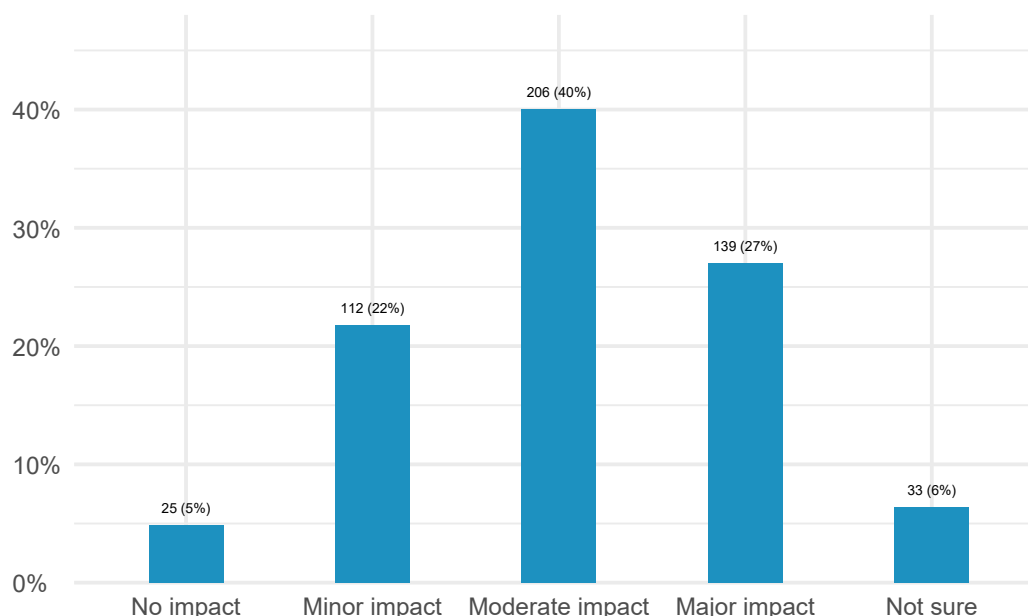
Half of the teachers were confident to address climate change issues in their classroom programme

To better understand teachers' experience about educating for climate change and environmental sustainability, the 2024 survey asked whether they felt confident in addressing climate change issues in their classroom programme and whether their school community had experienced the impacts of climate change (Figure 14).

Around half of the teachers (51%) reported feeling confident to address climate change issues in their classroom programme, with 10% strongly agreeing. Only 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this item. In contrast, when asked whether their school community had experienced the impacts of climate change, responses were more mixed. The largest proportion (43%) selected the neutral option, with 30% agreement (25% agreed and 5% strongly agreed) and 27% disagreement (22% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed).[20]

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20 This is slightly different from the findings of the 2024 national survey of primary school principals, where 41% of principals reported either one or both types of flood impact described in their survey question—"Flooding that impacted the homes of families and/or staff" and/or "Flooding that impacted school property and/or impacted staff or students' school access (e.g., roads, bridges)".

FIGURE 14 **Teachers' views about educating for climate change and environmental sustainability**
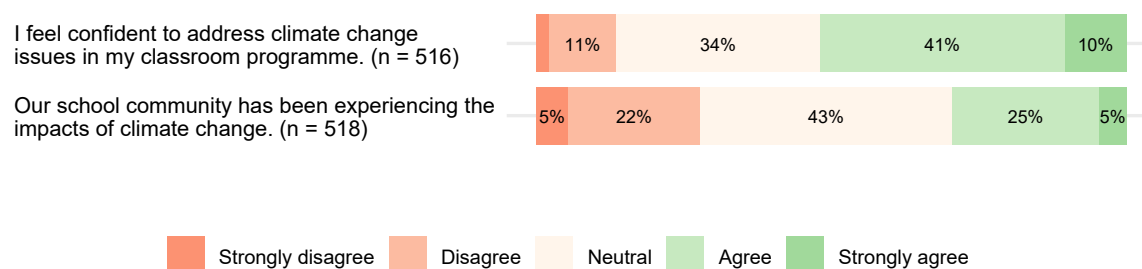
The survey results suggest that, while many teachers feel at least somewhat confident incorporating climate change into their teaching, perceptions of whether their community is already experiencing its effects vary widely. This variation may reflect regional differences or differing interpretations of what constitutes a climate impact. A statistically significant relationship was found between school region and teachers' response to whether their school community has experienced the impacts of climate change. As shown in Table 8, teachers in certain regions, such as Hawke's Bay, West Coast, and Northland, were more likely to indicate that their school communities had experienced these impacts. However, caution is needed when interpreting these results, as the number of respondents from some regions (e.g., Marlborough and Nelson) was relatively small.

TABLE 8 **The impacts of climate change on school community by region**

Our school community has been experiencing the impacts of climate change	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
Auckland region (n = 146)	2	19	42	29	8
Bay of Plenty region (n = 28)	11	14	54	18	4
Canterbury region (n = 49)	4	33	49	14	0
Hawke's Bay region (n = 11)	0	0	18	55	27
Manawatu-Wanganui region (n = 19)	21	16	32	32	0
Marlborough region (n = 1)	0	0	0	0	100
Nelson region (n = 2)	0	0	0	100	0
Northland region (n = 24)	0	21	33	33	12
Otago region (n = 42)	5	31	29	33	2
Southland region (n = 13)	8	8	69	15	0
Taranaki region (n = 15)	7	47	40	7	0
Tasman region (n = 16)	0	31	38	25	6
Waikato region (n = 85)	11	20	53	16	0
Wellington region (n = 56)	5	27	41	23	4
West Coast region (n = 11)	0	18	36	36	9

Fewer teachers strongly agreed they discussed climate change and sustainability in class, compared to 2019

In both the 2019 and 2024 surveys, teachers were asked about various climate and sustainability learning and teaching practices that might occur in their classrooms (Figure 15 and Figure 16). However, comparisons between years should be made with caution due to a change in the response scale: from a 4-point Likert scale in 2019 to a 5-point scale in 2024 that included a "neutral" option.

In 2024, 71% of teachers (compared with 89% in 2019) indicated that they talked about changing lifestyles to reduce impacts on the environment. Notably, while the proportion of teachers selecting "agree" remained stable across both years, the overall drop in agreement was driven by a sharp decline in "strongly agree" option, which fell from 31% in 2019 to just 13% in 2024. Meanwhile, levels of disagreement (6%) remained similar at both years (9% in 2019), suggesting no major increase in opposition to this item, despite a shift in the intensity of agreement.

A similar pattern was seen for talking about "the causes and impacts of climate change". In 2024, 50% of teachers reported talking about this topic in their class, compared with 71% in 2019. A marked decrease was observed in both "strongly agree" (from 20% in 2019 to only 9% in 2024) and "agree" options (from 51% in 2019 to 41% in 2024). Meanwhile, disagreement declined relatively slightly from 26% in 2019 to 19% in 2024.

These patterns suggest that, while the inclusion of a "neutral" option may have partly contributed to lower reported agreement overall, the substantial drop in "strongly agree" responses points to a potential decrease in the clear emphasis placed on discussion about climate change and environmental sustainability in class.

FIGURE 15 **Discussion about climate change and environmental sustainability in class**

In my class, we talk about...

changing our lifestyles to reduce our impacts on the environment (n = 517): 5% | 23% | 58% | 13%

the causes and impacts of climate change (n = 515): 16% | 32% | 41% | 9%

Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree
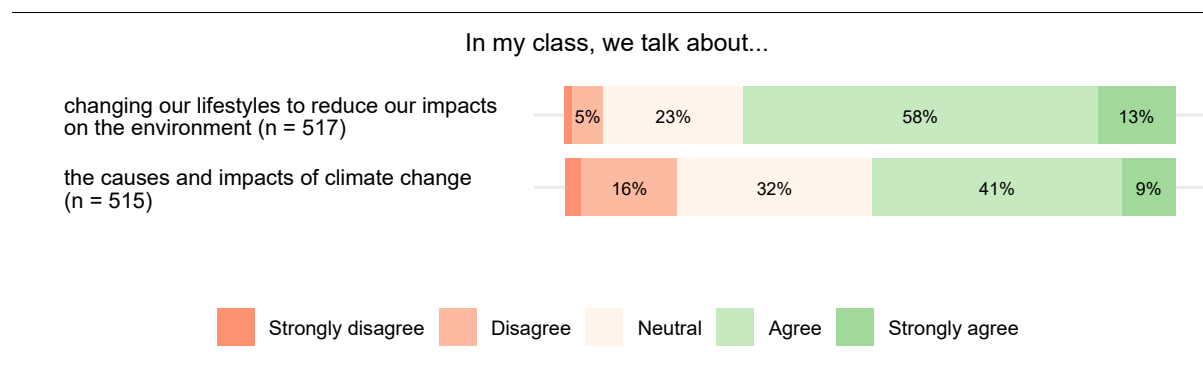
Environmental learning remained present in classrooms, but deeper engagement appears to have declined

As with previous items, there was a decline in the proportions of teachers indicating that students in their classes "learn about ecological and conservation issues for Aotearoa New Zealand" (68%, down from 81% in 2019) and "undertake direct actions for the environment" (64%, down from 77% in 2019). While the proportion selecting "agree" remained relatively stable across 2 years, the overall decline in agreement was primarily driven by a notable drop in "strongly agree" (from 23% to 14% for ecological and conservation learning, and from 31% to 15% for direct environmental actions). This suggests a potential decline in strong engagement with these activities. Meanwhile, although disagreement

also decreased for both items (from 17% to 9% for ecological learning, and from 19% to 11% for direct action), the decrease was primarily due to a 7% drop in "disagree" response for both items, rather than in "strongly disagree", which may be attributed to the introduction of the "neutral" option.

In contrast, the proportion of teachers indicating that their students "undertake social and community actions[21] for the environment" remained similar across both years (28% in 2024 and 30% in 2019). However, overall disagreement dropped sharply from 67% in 2019 to 37% in 2024, mainly due to a decline in "disagree" responses (from 60% to 31%), while a further 36% of 2024 teachers selected the newly introduced "neutral" option.

These trends suggest that, while environmental learning and action remain present in classrooms, the depth of teacher and student engagement in some of these areas may be softening. The introduction of a "neutral" option in 2024 likely captured responses from those with weaker opinions; however, the noticeable decline in strong agreement may somehow reflect a reduction in classroom activities that support deeper engagement with climate change and sustainability topics. This underscores the need for ongoing support to help teachers meaningfully embed these topics into classroom practice and foster stronger student engagement. Nevertheless, the overall pattern aligns with our findings from the earlier section on students' learning experiences (Figure 10), where around half of the teachers (47%) reported their students had opportunities to work together on a project or activity aimed to make a difference to their class/school/local environment or community "quite often" or "very often", which is similar to 2019.

FIGURE 16 **Teachers' views about learning activities related to climate change and environmental sustainability**
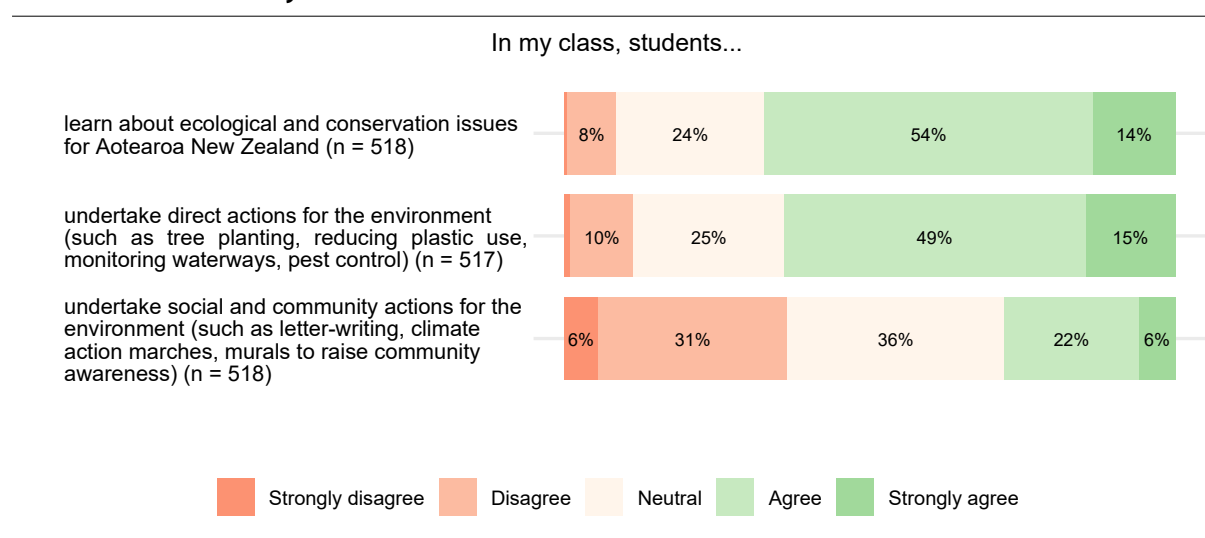
A statistically significant relationship was found between school region and teachers' response to the item "undertake social and community actions for the environment". As shown in Table 9, teachers in certain regions, such as Tasman and Otago regions, were more likely to report that students engaged in these activities. However, caution is needed when interpreting these results, as the number of respondents from some regions (e.g., Marlborough and Nelson) was relatively small, which may limit the reliability or generalisability of these regional patterns.

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21 In 2019, this item read "In my class, students undertake social actions for the environment".

TABLE 9   **Students' activities about undertaking social and community actions for the environment by region**

Undertake social and community actions for the environment (such as letter-writing, climate action marches, murals to raise community awareness)	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
Auckland region (n = 146)	4	27	45	18	7
Bay of Plenty region (n = 28)	11	32	36	14	7
Canterbury region (n = 49)	6	43	33	16	2
Hawke's Bay region (n = 11)	9	73	9	9	0
Manawatū-Wanganui region (n = 19)	5	42	37	11	5
Marlborough region (n = 1)	0	0	0	0	100
Nelson region (n = 2)	0	50	0	50	0
Northland region (n = 24)	4	38	25	33	0
Otago region (n = 42)	5	24	26	33	12
Southland region (n = 13)	0	31	31	15	23
Taranaki region (n = 15)	27	27	27	13	7
Tasman region (n = 17)	0	6	41	41	12
Waikato region (n = 84)	7	29	36	25	4
Wellington region (n = 56)	4	34	29	30	4
West Coast region (n = 11)	0	27	64	9	0

Te marautanga me te aromatawai | Curriculum and assessment

The national curriculum has been undergoing a substantial period of transition since the 2019 national survey. These changes, which were still underway at the time of the 2024 survey and this report, represent the most significant national curriculum reforms since the release of *The New Zealand Curriculum (NZC)* in 2007 (Ministry of Education, 2007) and *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa (TMoA)* in 2008 (Ministry of Education, 2008). The Curriculum and assessment domain gathered teachers' perspectives on these ongoing changes as well as their current assessment practices.

Assessment to improve teaching and learning

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the phrases "assessment for learning" and "formative assessment" have come to be used interchangeably. Inherent in both terms and central to both approaches is the importance of using assessment information to inform and improve students' learning and teachers' teaching (Ministry of Education, 2011). As in earlier surveys, the 2024 survey included a series of items about teachers' use of formative assessment approaches.

Nearly all teachers made good use of formative assessment practices, but use of assessments that reflect students' lived experiences and cultural heritage was not widespread

In both the 2019 and 2024 surveys, an almost identical pair of items about teachers' use of both formative assessment approaches and results from standardised tests was included. The pattern of teachers' responses to these two items was very similar across the two surveys. As shown in Figure 17, nearly all (93%) teachers in 2024 indicated that they purposefully use formative assessment approaches in their day-to-day teaching, consistent with the 2019 results.[22] Likewise, most teachers (78%) reported using the results from standardised tools (such as PATs) to inform their teaching, which is also similar to 2019.[23] Further evidence of teachers' good use of formative assessment approaches is shown in Figure 3 (see "Using evidence to improve teaching and learning" section under Teaching and learning domain), where 97% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the item "I analyse student achievement data to evaluate the effectiveness of my own teaching and make improvements".

A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' responses to the item "I purposefully use formative assessment approaches in my day-to-day teaching". While overall agreement was high across all school types (96% of teachers in intermediate schools, 95% of teachers in contributing schools, and 90% of teachers in full primary schools), teachers in intermediate schools were more likely to strongly agree (57%) than those in contributing schools (45%) and full primary schools (30%). This may reflect a greater focus on formative assessment approaches in the intermediate schools, which might be used more systematically to guide student progress and transition readiness.

FIGURE 17 **Teachers' use of student assessment**

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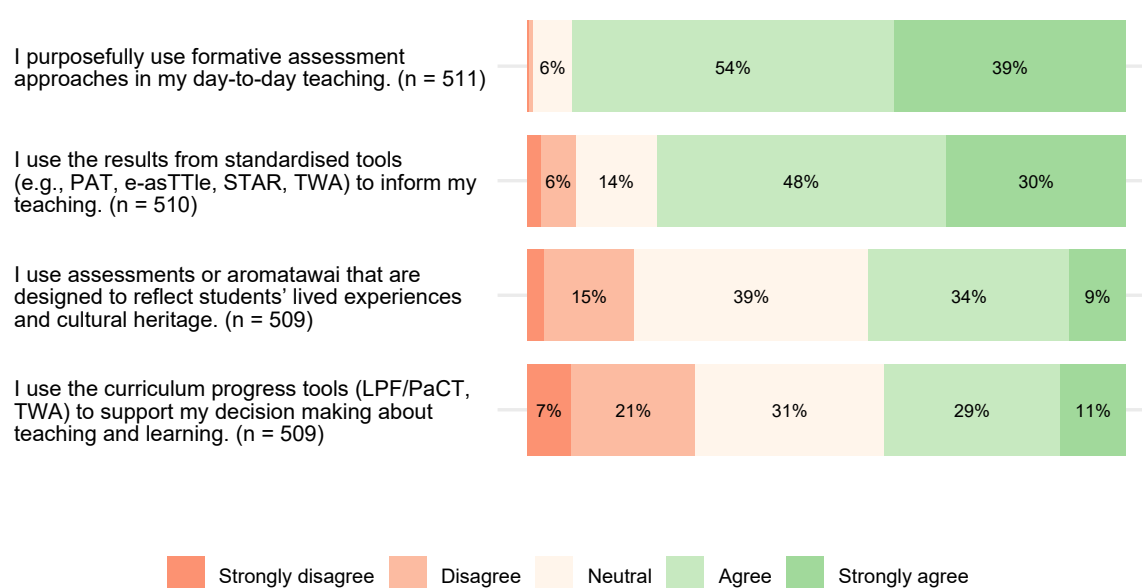
22 This item read "I use a range of formative assessment approaches in my day-to-day teaching and learning interactions" in 2019.
23 This item read "I use the results from standardised tools to inform my teaching programme" in 2019.

In 2024, a new item, "I use assessments or aromatawai that are designed to reflect students' lived experiences and cultural heritage", was added to this assessment-focused question. Fewer than half (43%) of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (34% agreeing, 9% strongly agreeing).[24] The opportunity that an assessment affords students to demonstrate their knowledge and ability in the specified area is a key feature of validity (Harlen, 1994). A variety of factors, including the extent to which an assessment reflects a student's lived experience and cultural heritage, can affect whether that assessment provides them with the opportunity to perform optimally (O'Dwyer et al., 2023). The finding reported here indicates that attention needs to be paid to ensuring that students see themselves in the assessments they experience.

The 2024 survey also included a new item asking teachers about their use of curriculum progress tools to support their decision making about teaching and learning. Curriculum progress tools include the Learning Progression Frameworks (LPFs), the Progress and Consistency Tool (PaCT), and Te Waharoa Ararau (TWA). In 2024, 40% of teachers reported using curriculum progress tools to support their decision making about teaching and learning. This is a different pattern from 2019, when teachers were asked two items that focused solely on their use of the PaCT.[25] At that time, only a small proportion of teachers reported using PaCT to support their decision making about assessment (16%) or their day-to-day teaching and learning activities (12%).

The updated New Zealand Curriculum

In 2019, a process was initiated to "refresh" the whole national curriculum, with sector input and engagement, over a phased period. Since the 2019 national survey, schools have engaged with the curriculum changes through: 1) periodic communication and engagement around the Curriculum refresh/curriculum update; 2) opportunities to view and feedback on draft components of the revised curriculum (with two learning areas revised twice); and 3) several changes to the timeline for updating and gazetting each learning area and the whole curriculum. More details of the curriculum refresh process are provided in the comparable section in the 2024 national survey of primary schools principals report (Li et al., 2025).

Because many parts of the curriculum update process were still in play at the time of our national survey completed by teachers in late 2024, we focused our curriculum questions in three areas: 1) teachers' perspectives on the direction of curriculum updates; 2) how confident teachers were feeling about teaching the English as well as mathematics and statistics learning areas; and 3) their views of teaching Aotearoa New Zealand's histories.

Around half of the teachers indicated that curriculum changes were going in the right direction

Just over half (53%) of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the New Zealand Curriculum changes are going in the right direction, with more than a third (37%) choosing a neutral response (Figure 18). Teachers' views about the direction of curriculum changes were less positive than principals, where agreement reached 70%, and only one in five (19%) principals chose a neutral response.

A statistically significant relationship was observed by teachers' ethnicity and their responses to this item. Non-Māori teachers showed higher levels of agreement (55%) compared to kaiako Māori (39%). Conversely, kaiako Māori were more likely to express disagreement (22%, with 15% disagreeing and

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24 Teachers from schools with more socioeconomic barriers tended to rate this statement more positively, although this was not statistically significant.

25 The 2019 survey included two items that focused solely on teachers' use of the PaCT: "I use the PaCT to support my decision making about assessment" and "Use of the PaCT supports my day-to-day teaching and learning activities".

7% strongly disagreeing), compared to just 8% of non-Māori teachers (only 2% strongly disagreeing). These findings suggest that kaiako Māori may feel less aligned with or represented in the direction of the updated New Zealand Curriculum, highlighting a need for deeper engagement with Māori voices in the development and implementation of curriculum changes.

FIGURE 18 **Teachers' views on the updated New Zealand Curriculum**
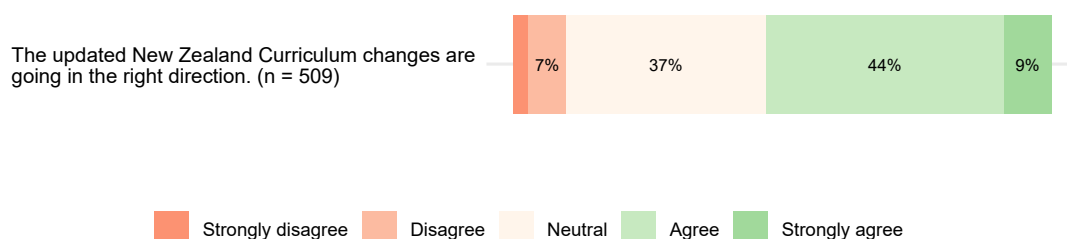
The updated New Zealand Curriculum changes are going in the right direction. (n = 509)

| 7% | 37% | 44% | 9% |

Strongly disagree   Disagree   Neutral   Agree   Strongly agree

Around half of the teachers felt confident in teaching the updated English, Mathematics and statistics learning areas

Throughout 2024, the sector was informed about an intent to ensure all schools were using "structured" approaches to the teaching of literacy and mathematics. The Ministry of Education funded a programme of PLD for structured literacy and te reo matatini approaches from Term 3 2024, initially available to a cohort of Years 0–3 teachers, and expanding to Years 4–8 teachers from 2025.[26] PLD for structured approaches to maths[27] started in Term 1 2025, with some schools engaging with the document in Term 4 2024 internally or with PLD support.

At the time of the 2024 national survey, most teachers had not yet begun these PLD; even those in the first cohort were only at the early stages of a programme designed to span three terms. Therefore, our survey findings provide an important early snapshot of teacher confidence in implementing the updated curriculum before widespread professional development had taken place. As shown in Figure 19, with around half of the teachers expressing confidence in teaching the updated English (50%) and Mathematics and statistics (49%) learning areas, the results indicate a moderate starting point, but also highlight considerable room for growth, as approximately one-third of the teachers selected the "neutral" option for both areas. This is echoed by teachers' PLD needs (see "Future PLD needs" section under Support and resourcing domain), with Figure 38 showing that 59% of teachers selected "effective teaching of mathematics" (the top priority) and 46% selected "effective teaching of structured literacy" (ranked among the top three priorities).

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26 https://pld.education.govt.nz/structured-literacy-and-maths-pld/structured-literacy-approaches/
27 https://newzealandcurriculum.tahurangi.education.govt.nz/pld-for-structured-approaches-to-maths/5637239828.p

FIGURE 19 **Teachers' confidence in teaching the updated learning area**

I feel confident about teaching ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
the updated English learning area in 2025 (n = 508)	6%	12%	31%	39%	11%
the updated Mathematics and statistics learning area in 2025 (n = 512)	7%	16%	28%	40%	9%

Legend: Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree
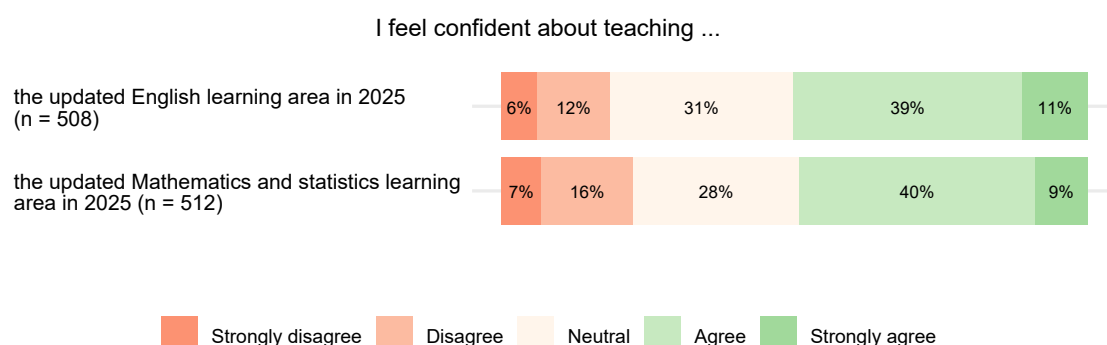
Nearly all teachers thought that learning Aotearoa New Zealand's histories is important

The Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum was not available when we last surveyed primary teachers in 2019; therefore, the 2024 survey provided an opportunity to gather teachers' perspectives on this learning area.

Nealy all (96%) teachers indicated that "it is important for learners to understand the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand", with more than half (53%) agreeing strongly (Figure 20). Just over three-quarters (76%) agreed or strongly agreed that they "enjoy teaching the curriculum content for Aotearoa New Zealand's histories", though one in five (20%) chose a "neutral" response.

FIGURE 20 **Views of teaching Aotearoa New Zealand's histories**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
I think it is important for learners to understand the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand. (n = 505)				43%	53%
I enjoy teaching the curriculum content for Aotearoa New Zealand's histories. (n = 504)			20%	48%	28%

Legend: Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree
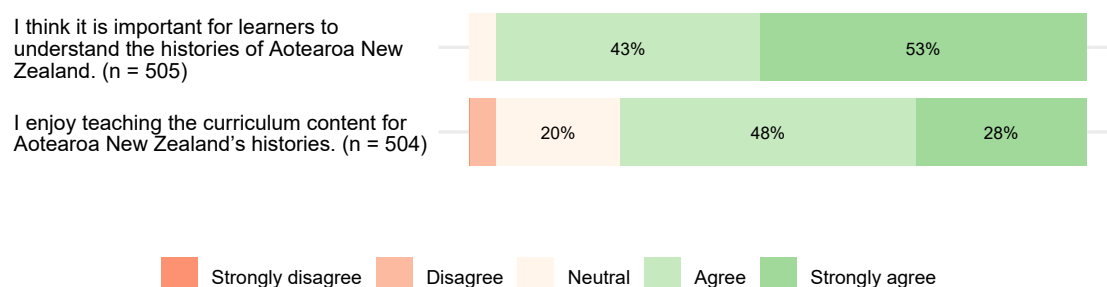
Additionally, Figure 21 shows that 76% of teachers indicated their own knowledge about Aotearoa New Zealand's histories at a national level had grown, and 75% indicated that their knowledge of the local hapū and iwi histories of their area had grown. These findings add to other research on Aotearoa New Zealand's histories curriculum implementation showing the opportunities, aspirations, and enabling supports needed by schools (Bolstad et al., 2025; Education Review Office, 2024).

FIGURE 21 **Teachers' knowledge about teaching Aotearoa New Zealand's histories**

My knowledge about ...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand at a national level has grown (n = 505)		5%	20%	58%	18%
the local hapū and iwi histories of this area has grown (n = 507)		6%	19%	54%	21%

■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree
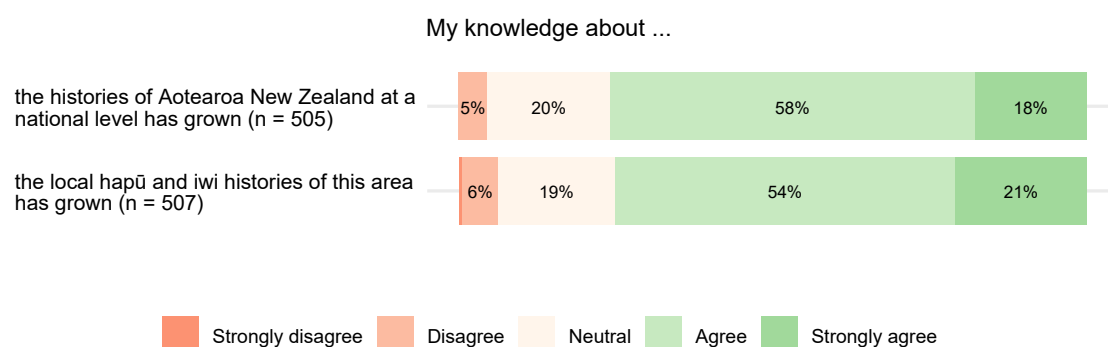
Teachers' responses to the item "My knowledge about the local hapū and iwi histories of this area has grown" were statistically significantly related to their ethnicity and their school type. Kaiako Māori showed higher levels of agreement (83%) than non-Māori teachers (74%), suggesting stronger connections or engagement with local histories. Teachers in contributing schools (82%) and intermediate schools (79%) also reported higher levels of agreement than those in full primary schools (68%), indicating that some school contexts may place greater emphasis on this learning or have more access to relevant professional development. These findings highlight the importance of providing all teachers with meaningful opportunities to deepen their understanding of local histories, along with more consistent support across all school types—both essential for fostering culturally responsive teaching and honouring Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Te hao i te katoa | Inclusion

The Inclusion domain in the teacher survey focused on supporting and respecting diversity, capturing teachers' views on their knowledge, resources, and school culture related to diversity and inclusion.[28]

Supporting and respecting diversity

The same question regarding teachers' knowledge and resources to teach students about diversity was included in both the 2019 and 2024 surveys, with the only change being replacing the "not sure" option used in 2019 with "neutral" in 2024.

More teachers felt equipped to teach about cultural diversity and diversity of abilities than religious diversity or diversity in gender identity or sexual orientation

The overall patterns of teachers' knowledge and resources to teach about diversity in 2024 are aligned with findings from 2019, with more teachers feeling equipped to teach about cultural diversity and diversity of abilities than religious diversity and diversity in gender identity or sexual orientation.

As shown in Figure 22, most teachers (78%, down from 92% in 2019) reported having the knowledge and resources to teach students about "cultural diversity, including language and identity". Similarly, over two-thirds (68%, down from 88% in 2019) agreed or strongly agreed they had the knowledge and resources to teach about the "diversity of abilities and disabilities". For both items, the decline in agreement was mainly driven by a noticeable drop in the "strongly agree" responses, which fell from 28% to 16% for "cultural diversity" and from 26% to 14% for "diversity of abilities and disabilities".

There was also a decline in the proportion of teachers who agreed or strongly agreed that they had the knowledge and resources to teach students about "religious diversity" (47%, down from 68% in 2019) and "diversity in gender identity or sexual orientation" (28%, down from 63% in 2019). Unlike the previous two items, the most notable decrease here occurred in the "agree" responses, which fell from 51% to 37% for "religious diversity" and from 48% to 23% for "gender identity and sexual orientation". While the introduction of a "neutral" response option (replacing "not sure") may account for some of the shift, the proportion of teachers who disagreed or strongly disagreed that they have the knowledge and resources to teacher students about gender identity and sexual orientation rose to 34% in 2024, up from 24% in 2019.

These findings show that there has been no improvement in the proportion of teachers feeling equipped to teach students about diversity—indeed, patterns point to a decline. This may be due to gaps in clarity about what to teach, or access to appropriate resources. It may also reflect changes in societal discourse since 2019, growing complexities in the classroom, and changing student needs. The findings point to a need for PLD and resourcing to sustain high levels of teacher confidence in these areas. Reflecting this, when asked about their future professional development needs (see "Future PLD needs" section under Support and resourcing domain), 35% of teachers said they wanted PLD on "inclusive education and diversity" (Figure 38).

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28 The principal survey included a broader set of questions on inclusion at a school-wide level.

FIGURE 22 **Teachers' views on having knowledge and resources to teach students about diversity**
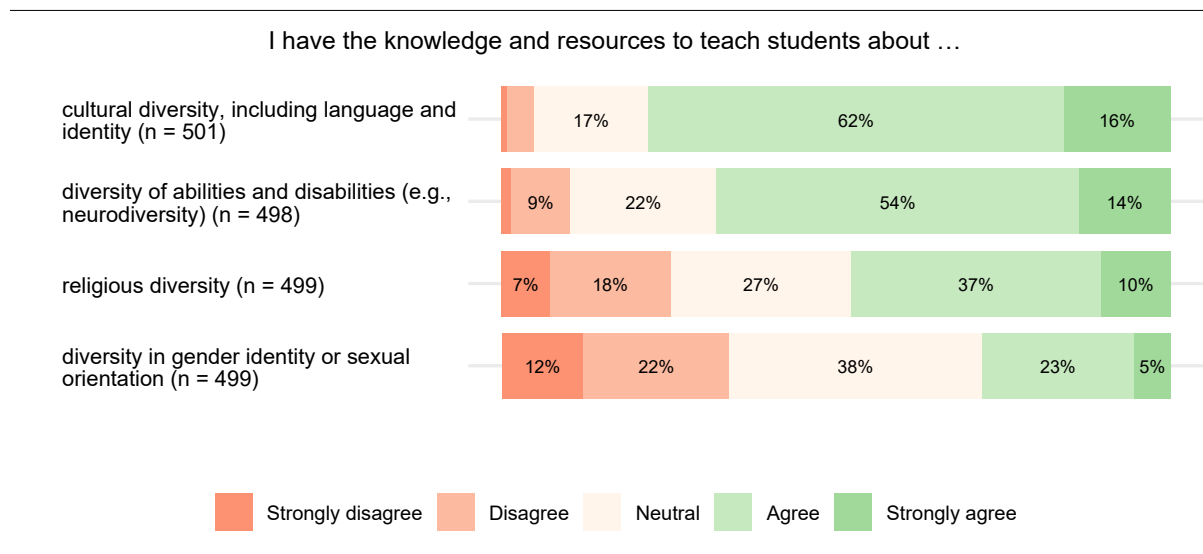
I have the knowledge and resources to teach students about …

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
cultural diversity, including language and identity (n = 501)		17%		62%	16%
diversity of abilities and disabilities (e.g., neurodiversity) (n = 498)	9%	22%		54%	14%
religious diversity (n = 499)	7%	18%	27%	37%	10%
diversity in gender identity or sexual orientation (n = 499)	12%	22%	38%	23%	5%

Legend: Strongly disagree · Disagree · Neutral · Agree · Strongly agree

Most teachers were positive about their school culture and support for diversity and inclusion, while only over half of teachers felt they had school-wide support to understand and address biases they may have as teachers

The 2024 survey included a question about teachers' perspectives on their school's culture and support for diversity and inclusion, using a reduced item list from the 2019 survey. The main change was in the response scale, which shifted from a "very poor" to a "very good" scale in 2019,[29] to a "strongly disagree" to a "strongly agree" scale in 2024.

Similar to 2019, most teachers (75%) indicated that their school "sees all forms of student diversity as a resource and a strength, not as a difficulty", and nearly two-thirds (65%) of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that "all staff think it is possible to address the barriers to learning that are experienced by students who need learning support". More than half (57%) of the teachers felt they had school-wide support to understand and address biases they may have as teachers, slightly up from 52% in 2019.

FIGURE 23 **Teachers' views of their school culture in relation to diversity and inclusion**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Our school sees all forms of student diversity as a resource and a strength, not as a difficulty. (n = 501)		6%	19%	52%	23%
All staff think it is possible to address the barriers to learning that are experienced by students who need learning support. (n = 500)		13%	20%	49%	16%
We have school-wide support to understand and address biases we may have as teachers. (n = 500)	10%		30%	48%	9%

Legend: Strongly disagree · Disagree · Neutral · Agree · Strongly agree

29 In 2019, the 5-point scale used for this question was "very good", "good", "satisfactory", "poor", and "very poor".

Te toiora | Wellbeing

The Wellbeing domain explored several key aspects of both teachers' and students' wellbeing. Regarding teachers' own wellbeing, the survey included questions on their work experience (e.g., stress, job satisfaction, and autonomy), their perceptions of school culture factors and ways of working, as well as how they are supported to assist students with wellbeing needs. Another important focus was on student behaviours, including school-wide processes for managing student behaviour, along with teachers' direct experiences with student behaviours within their schools.

Teachers' workload, job satisfaction, stress, and morale

The NZCER national survey has tracked teachers' job satisfaction, morale, and workload across several survey cycles.

Nearly all teachers enjoyed their work

Since 2013, teachers' views on job enjoyment, workload, and morale have remained relatively stable. In 2024, job enjoyment continued to be high, with 90% of teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing that they enjoy their work (see Figure 24). However, the proportion who strongly agreed declined slightly, from 46% in 2019 to 38% in 2024, with more teachers shifting to "agree", suggesting a small softening in the intensity of positive sentiment. Most teachers (75%) also indicated that their overall morale was good and that they received the support they needed inside the school to do their job effectively, reflecting a similar pattern to 2019.

In contrast, only 44% agreed or strongly agreed that "the level of work-related stress in my job is manageable", although this marks a slight improvement from 38% in 2019. These trends suggest that, while job enjoyment, morale, and perceived school support remain positive, work-related stress continues to be a persistent challenge for teachers, with only modest improvements in teachers' perceptions of managing work-related stress over the past 5 years.

FIGURE 24 **Teachers' morale, stress, and job satisfaction**
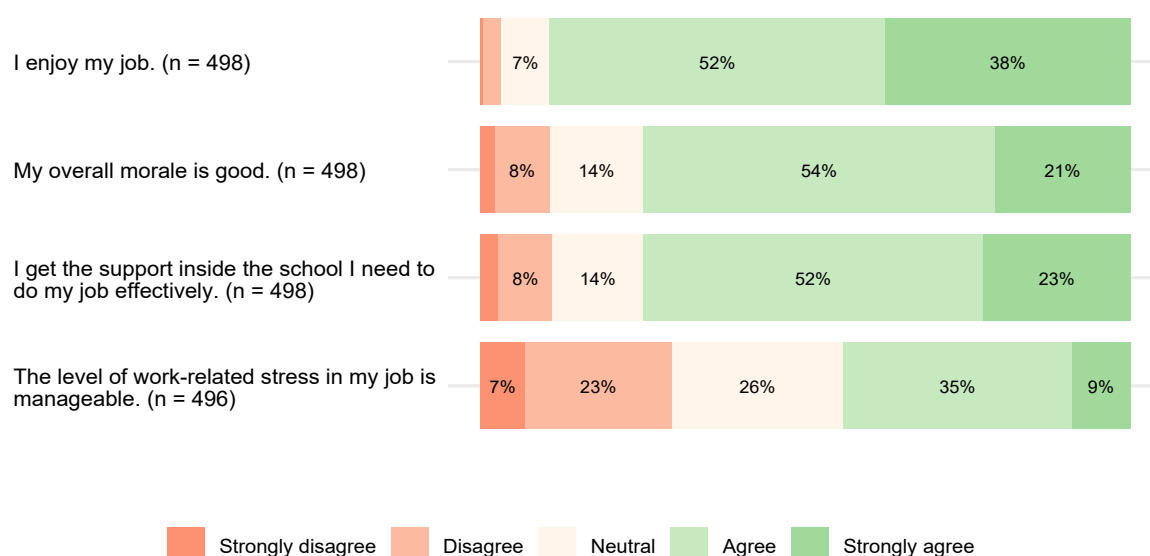
Workload concerns remained but, since 2016, the proportion of teachers working an additional 11 hours or more per week has decreased

Figure 25 shows teachers' perceptions of their workload. Only half of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed their workload was manageable (52%) or fair (48%), while a quarter (25%) believed their workload was so high that they could not do justice to the students they taught. This mirrors the pattern seen in 2019, signalling ongoing concerns about workload. However, there has been a slight improvement, with agreement that "my workload is manageable" rising from 46% in 2019 to 52% in 2024.

A statistically significant relationship was observed by teachers' ethnicity and their responses to the item "my workload is manageable". Non-Māori teachers showed higher levels of agreement (55%), compared to kaiako Māori (34%). Conversely, a greater proportion of kaiako Māori expressed disagreement (29%), although 0% strongly disagreed, while 21% of non-Māori teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed (17% and 4%, respectively). These findings suggest that kaiako Māori may experience greater workload pressures, which could be linked to additional cultural responsibilities, expectations to support Māori students and whānau, or roles in leading culturally responsive practices within their schools.

FIGURE 25 **Teachers' views on their workload**
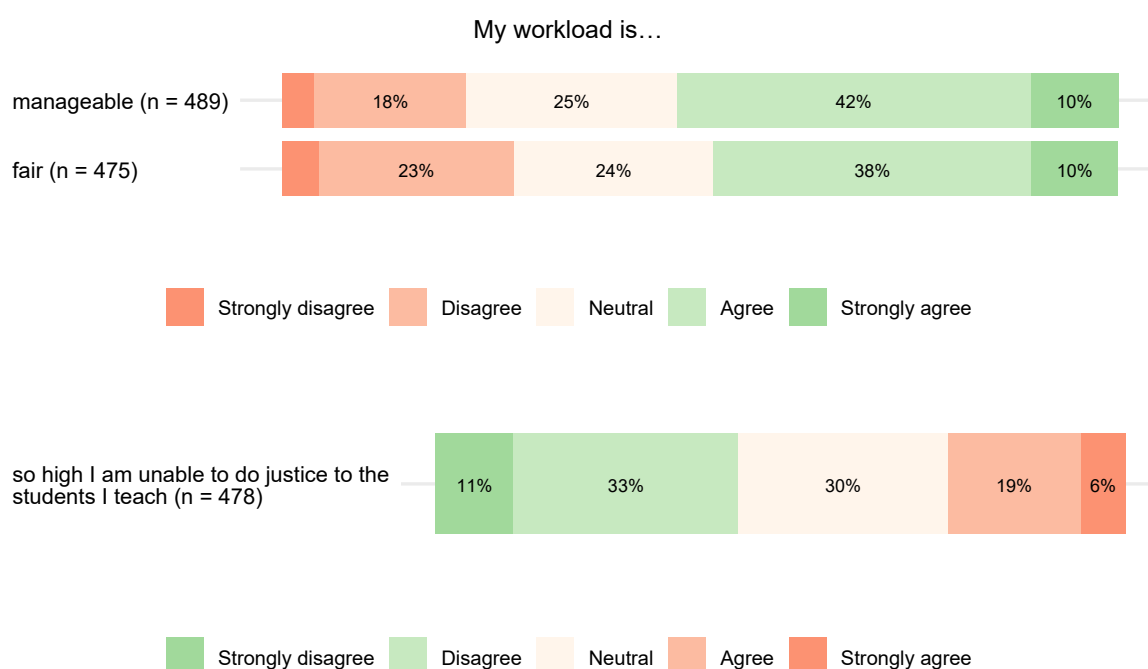
As shown in Figure 26, 57% of teachers reported working an additional 11 hours or more per week, down from 67% in 2019 and 80% in 2016. In contrast, the proportion of teachers working 1–10 additional hours has steadily increased, rising from 18% in 2016 to 31% in 2019, and to 41% in 2024. This trend suggests that, while workload pressures remain a significant issue, there are signs of gradual improvement, with a smaller proportion of teachers working a high number of hours beyond timetabled hours.

FIGURE 26 **Teachers' hours worked outside timetabled school hours: Comparison over time**

Proportion of teachers working outside timetabled school hours

Legend: ■ 2016 (n = 771) ■ 2019 (n = 620) ■ 2024 (n = 498)
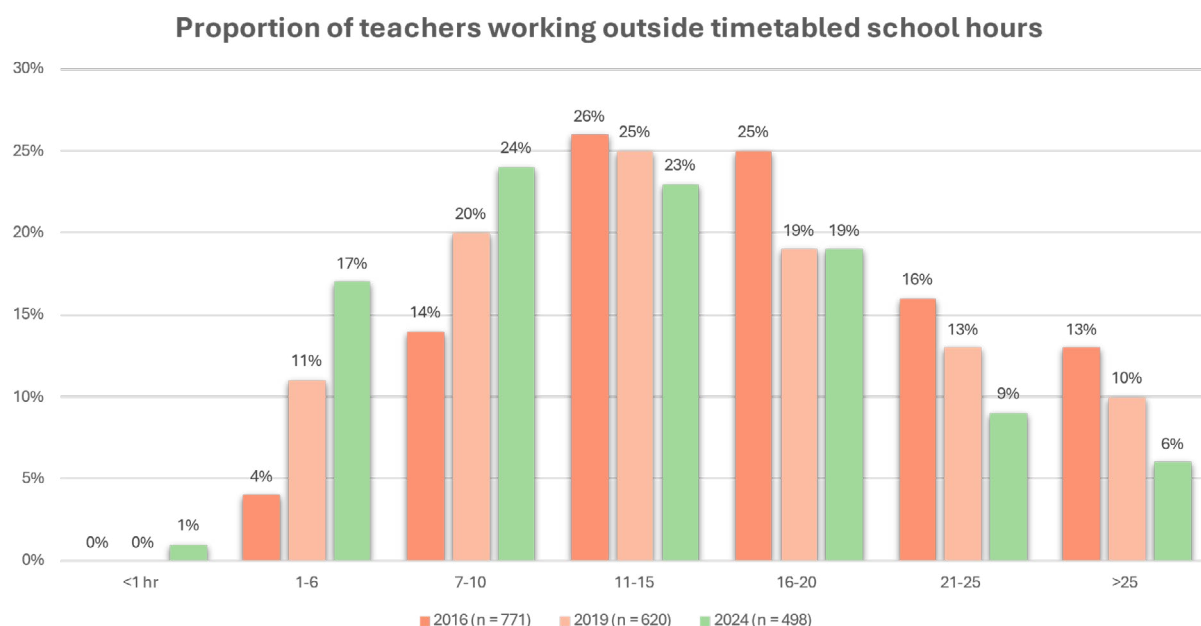
Teachers' autonomy

In 2024, we introduced a new question about teacher autonomy under the Wellbeing domain to better understand this important aspect of teachers' work

Nearly all teachers felt confident trying new practices and most reported having enough autonomy over how they plan, teach, and assess learning

Nearly all teachers (92%) indicated that they felt confident trying new practices in their teaching, and more than three-quarters (77%) reported having enough autonomy over how they plan, teach, and assess learning (Figure 27).

A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' responses to the item "I feel confident about trying new practices in my teaching". Teachers in contributing schools (92%) and full primary schools (94%) reported higher levels of agreement than those in intermediate schools (81%). Meanwhile, teachers in intermediate schools were more likely to disagree or strongly disagree with this item (8%) than those in contributing schools (2%) and full primary schools (1%).

FIGURE 27 **Teachers' views of their autonomy**

Legend: ■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neutral ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree
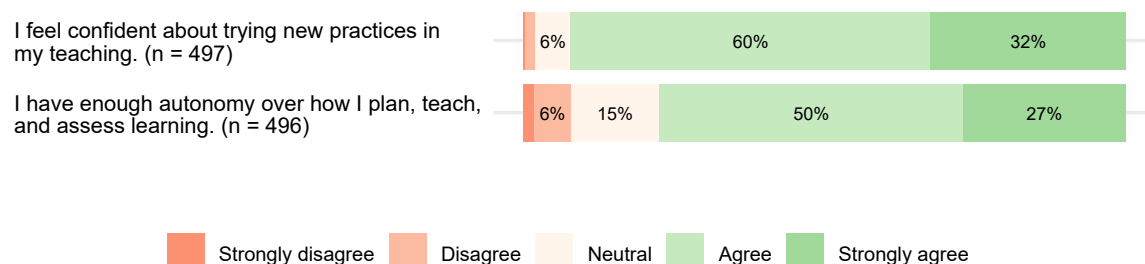
School culture and ways of working

The 2024 survey continued to ask a set of items on teachers' perceptions of school culture factors that may influence their wellbeing.

Most teachers reported consistent messaging around their school's vision, enactment of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and a focus on ongoing teacher learning, but concerns about interrupted teaching time persisted

The items about school culture factors (Figure 28) are part of a longstanding set of questions in the national survey, although minor wording and scale change (from a "very poor" to "very good" scale to a "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" scale) were made for two items below in 2024:

- Messages about the overall vision/values of the school are consistent[30] (87% agreement in 2024, consistent with 2019).
- Te Tiriti o Waitangi is enacted in school values and day-to-day activities[31] (85% agreement in 2024, compared with 73% who rated the equivalent item as "good" or "very good" in 2019).

Bearing in mind the potential influence of the scale change, the trend suggests schools may be finding more ways to embed Te Tiriti into their values and day-to-day practices.

No change was made to the remaining two items in the 2024 survey, allowing direct comparison across years. Most teachers (80%, up from 71% in 2019) agreed or strongly agreed that their school had a real focus on ongoing learning for teachers as adult professionals. However, just below half (48%, similar to 50% in 2019) agreed or strongly agreed that teaching time was protected from unnecessary interruptions, indicating this remains an ongoing concern.

A statistically significant relationship was found between schools' EQI group and teachers' responses to the item "messages about the overall vision/values of the school are consistent". Teachers at schools with fewer socioeconomic challenges reported more overall agreement (91%), compared with those at schools with moderate (88%) or more socioeconomic challenges (75%). While the causes of this difference remain unclear, it may be influenced by factors such as principal turnover, variations in leadership experience and preparedness,[32] or capacity across schools, which can disrupt consistency in messaging. Given the key role of school leaders in shaping and communicating a school's vision and values, these factors warrant further exploration.

A statistically significant relationship was also found between school type and teachers' responses to the item "Te Tiriti o Waitangi is enacted in our school values and day-to-day activities". Teachers in contributing schools (91%) reported higher levels of agreement than those in full primary schools (81%) and intermediate schools (78%).

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30 In 2019, the item read "Consistent messages about overall vision/values of school".
31 In 2019, the item read "Understanding and honouring te Tiriti o Waitangi in our school values and day-to-day activities".
32 In the 2024 principal survey, principals in schools facing more socioeconomic challenges were more likely to want PLD for "learning to lead as a first-time principal" (27%), compared with just 6% in schools with moderate and fewer socioeconomic barriers. This suggests a greater need for PLD for first-time principals in schools with higher socioeconomic challenges.

FIGURE 28 **Teachers' views of their school culture and ways of working**

Messages about the overall vision/values of the school are consistent. (n = 494)	8% · 52% · 35%	
Te Tiriti o Waitangi is enacted in our school values and day-to-day activities. (n = 495)	11% · 59% · 26%	
This school has a real focus on the ongoing learning of teachers as adult professionals. (n = 496)	15% · 53% · 27%	
Teaching time is protected from unnecessary interruptions. (n = 496)	6% · 17% · 29% · 39% · 9%	

Strongly disagree　Disagree　Neutral　Agree　Strongly agree
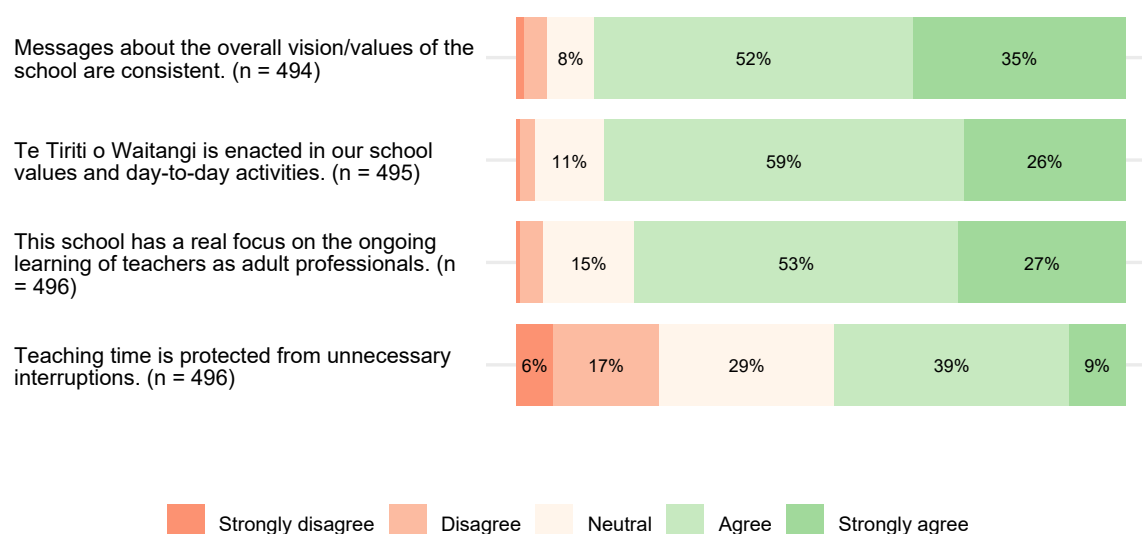
Support for teachers to assist students with wellbeing needs

As part of the broader focus on teachers' wellbeing, we explored their perceptions of the support and training they received to assist students with wellbeing needs.

Most teachers indicated their school has an effective plan for student wellbeing but only half said they could access timely support for students with wellbeing needs

Three of the four survey items (see Figure 29) were included in the 2019 survey, although with a minor change in the response scale (the 2019 "not sure" option was replaced by "neutral" in 2024). An additional item focusing on "trauma-related responses" was introduced in the 2024 survey.

Three-quarters of teachers (75%) agreed or strongly agreed that their school has an effective whole-school plan to support student wellbeing and belonging. This is a decline from 86% in 2019, primarily driven by a decrease in the proportion of teachers who "strongly agreed" falling from 36% in 2019 to 22% in 2024. This trend indicates a weakening in the strength and intensity of teachers' positive perceptions of their schools' wellbeing plan, despite an overall positive picture.

Teachers' responses suggest that gaps remain in the support and training available to help them address students' additional wellbeing needs. In 2024, just 54% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that they could access timely support for students with additional wellbeing needs, compared with 68% in 2019. The decline in agreement was again largely driven by a drop in "strongly agree" responses—from 23% in 2019 to 12% in 2024—highlighting a diminished sense of strong certainty around the availability of support.

When asked about specific training, fewer than half agreed or strongly agreed that they had sufficient training to recognise trauma-related responses (48%, a new item introduced in 2024) or mental health warning signs in students[33] (44%, up from 32% in 2019, with the main increase in "agree" responses from 26% in 2019 to 38% in 2024).

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33 In 2019, this item read "Teachers have training to help them recognise mental health warning signs in students".

Overall, while most teachers still viewed their schools' wellbeing strategies positively, the need for more accessible support and enhanced training is evident. This is reflected in teachers' self-reported PLD needs (see "Future PLD needs" section under Support and resourcing domain), with "mental health and wellbeing support" chosen by 45% of the teachers and ranked as one of the top priorities (Figure 38).

FIGURE 29 **Support and training for teachers to support students' wellbeing**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
We have an effective whole-school plan to support student wellbeing and belonging. (n = 489)		6%	19%	53%	22%
I can access timely support (e.g., school or external) for students with additional wellbeing needs. (n = 490)	6%	14%	26%	42%	12%
I have had sufficient training to recognise trauma-related responses. (n = 488)		22%	26%	41%	7%
I have had sufficient training to recognise mental health warning signs in students. (n = 490)		25%	27%	38%	6%

Student behaviour management

Recognising the critical impact of student behaviour on school management and both teacher and student wellbeing, we asked teachers about their schools' approaches to promoting positive behaviours, addressing unwanted behaviours, and their personal experiences with student behaviour. Most of these areas have been consistently addressed in previous cycles of the national survey, enabling us to track and report on trends over time.

Most teachers were positive about their schools' approaches to supporting positive student behaviour, but the level of agreement has declined since 2019

To explore schools' approaches to supporting **positive student behaviour,** the 2024 survey used a shortened list of items from the 2019 survey, with minor changes in wording and the scale (replacing the 2019 "not sure" option with "neutral" in 2024). An overall decline in agreement was observed across all items.

As shown in Figure 30, most teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their school had aspects of a consistent approach in place in terms of:

- "an effective and shared system for encouraging positive behaviours and celebrating successes"[34] (87%, down from 93% in 2019)
- "a consistent school-wide process to teach all students how to resolve conflicts" (74%, down from 81% in 2019).

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34 In 2019, this item read "We have an effective system that staff use to encourage positive behaviours and celebrate successes".

However, just over half of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) was readily available to help them work with students who need extra social or behavioural support[35] (53%, down from 58% in 2019).

A closer examination of the results shows that, for these three items, the decline in overall agreement was primarily driven by a sharp drop in "strongly agree" responses, while the proportion of teachers selecting "agree" remained stable or even increased:

- "Effective and shared system for encouraging positive behaviours and celebrating successes" (33% strongly agreeing, down from 49% in 2019; 54% agreeing, up from 44% in 2019).
- "Consistent school-wide process to teach all students how to resolve conflicts" (23% strongly agreeing, down from 38% in 2019; 51% agreeing, up from 43% in 2019).
- "Availability of RTLB support" (15% strongly agreeing, down from 21% in 2019; 38% agreeing, similar to 37% in 2019).

The findings suggest that, while many teachers still perceive their schools as having effective and consistent approaches to promoting positive behaviour, the strength of agreement has weakened over time.

Half of the teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their school sought students' input when developing approaches to behaviour management (51%, down from 68% in 2019). The decline in agreement was for both "strongly agree" (13, down from 22% in 2019) and "agree" (38%, down from 46% in 2019) responses. This highlights an area where schools may need to place greater emphasis if they wish to create more inclusive, student-centred approaches to behaviour management.

FIGURE 30 **Teachers' views of their school approach to supporting positive student behaviour**

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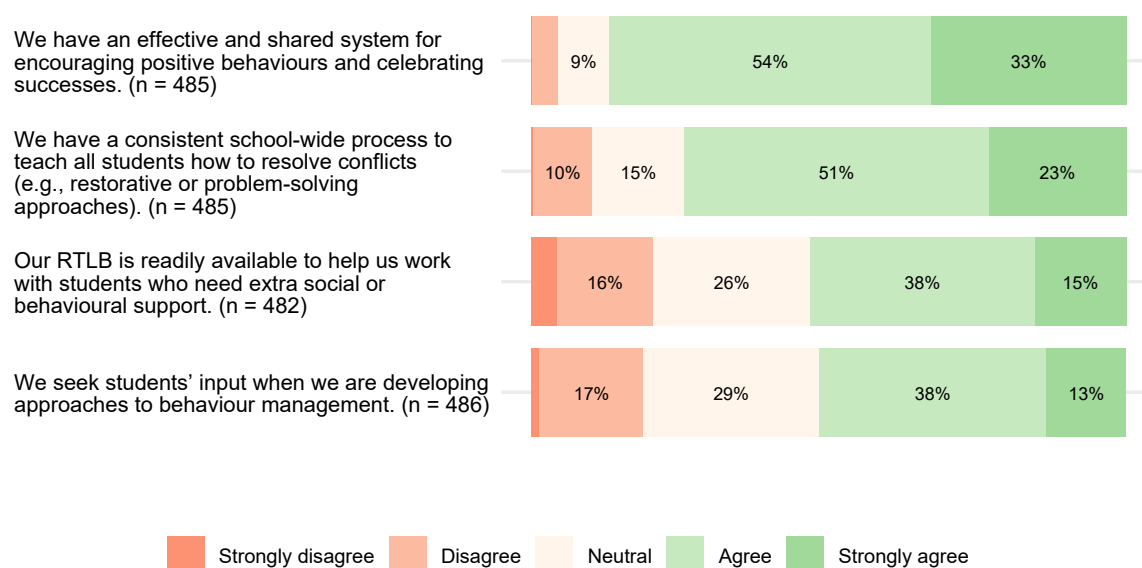
35 In 2019, this item read "Our RTLB is readily available when we need them to help us work with students who may benefit from extra support to develop pro-social behavioural skills".

Most teachers indicated that school-wide approaches for addressing unwanted behaviours were clear, but fewer were positive about their effectiveness

Continuing to build new ways of addressing **unwanted behaviours** is key for Aotearoa New Zealand schools, as international studies consistently show we have high rates of bullying behaviour compared with other countries (Ministry of Education, 2017; Mullis et al., 2016). In addition, research shows that tamariki Māori have to deal with racism at school which impacts on their wellbeing (Boyd et al., 2021; Office of the Children's Commissioner & NZ School Trustees Association, 2018).

To explore this area, we included two items from the previous survey asking teachers about how clear their school-wide process for addressing unwanted behaviours is (Figure 31), on an updated scale (the "not sure" option was replaced by "neutral" in 2024). In addition, two new items were introduced in 2024 asking teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the approaches (Figure 32).

As shown in Figure 31, most teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their school had a clear school-wide process for addressing student bullying behaviours (73%, down from 79% in 2019) and racist or discriminatory behaviour (72%, similar to 73% in 2019). Both items showed a shift from "strongly agree" to "agree" responses:

- "Student bullying behaviours" (23% strongly agreeing, down from 36% in 2019; 50% agreeing, up from 43% in 2019).
- "Racist or discriminatory behaviour" (24% strongly agreeing, down from 31% in 2019; 48% agreeing, up from 42% in 2019).

FIGURE 31 **Teachers' views on whether there is a school-wide approach for addressing unwanted student behaviour**

We have a clear school-wide process for addressing...

student bullying behaviours (n = 484): 9% | 17% | 50% | 23%

students' racist or discriminatory comments or behaviour (n = 481): 10% | 16% | 48% | 24%

Legend: Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree
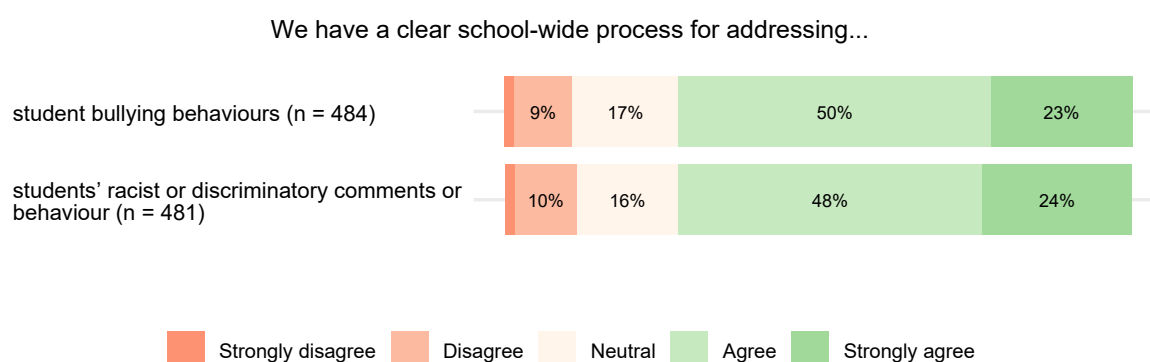
Teachers were less likely to report positive views on the effectiveness of these approaches. Figure 32 shows that fewer teachers (61%) agreed or strongly agreed that the approaches their school used to address these two forms of behaviour were effective, with a sizeable group (28%) selecting a neutral response.

FIGURE 32 **Teachers' views on the effectiveness of approaches for addressing unwanted student behaviour**

The approaches we use for addressing...

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
student bullying are effective (n = 486)	10%	28%		47%	14%
racist or discriminatory comments or behaviour are effective (n = 485)	9%	28%		46%	15%

Legend: Strongly disagree · Disagree · Neutral · Agree · Strongly agree
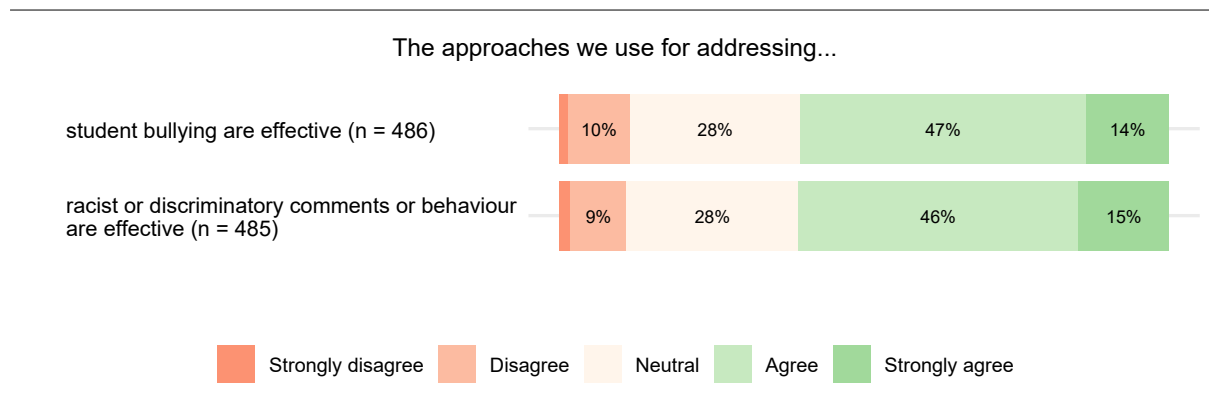
Compared with 2019, more teachers had experienced student behaviour that caused serious disruption to their teaching

Figure 33 presents teachers' experiences of feeling unsafe at school and encountering student behaviour that disrupts their teaching.

Consistent with 2019, most teachers reported that they never felt unsafe either on school grounds (79%) or in their classrooms (78%). Just around 20% of teachers reported feeling unsafe in their school, with most of them describing it as "occasional" rather than "frequent". Compared with 2019, there was a small drop in the proportion reporting that they "occasionally" felt unsafe, from 23% to 18% for feeling unsafe outside class, and from 24% to 20% for feeling unsafe in class, suggesting a slight improvement.

Despite slight improvements in teachers' feelings of safety, concerns about serious classroom disruption have become more salient. In 2024, 82% (up from 68% in 2019) of the teachers reported experiencing disruptive student behaviour that causes serious disruption to their teaching[36] over the past 5 years. Notably, 28% experienced such disruptions "frequently" (similar to 25% in 2019 who selected "often"), while 54% experienced them "occasionally" (up from 43% in 2019 who selected "sometimes").

FIGURE 33 **Teachers' experiences with student behaviour at this school in the past 5 years**

	Yes, frequently	Yes, occasionally	No/Never
At this school, I felt unsafe in the school grounds, hall, corridors or other areas outside my class (e.g., when on duty). (n = 484)		18%	79%
At this school, I have felt unsafe in my class. (n = 484)		20%	78%
I have experienced student behaviour that causes serious disruption to my teaching. (n = 484)	28%	54%	18%

Legend: Yes, frequently · Yes, occasionally · No/Never

36 In 2019, this item was asked as "How often do you experience student behaviour that causes serious disruption to your teaching?" on a scale from "rarely/never", "sometimes", to "often".

A statistically significant relationship was found between schools' EQI groups and teachers' responses to the item, "I have experienced student behaviour that causes serious disruption to my teaching". Teachers in schools with more socioeconomic challenges were more likely to report experiencing extreme behaviour—both overall and more frequently. At these schools, 93% of teachers reported they experienced such behaviour either frequently (49%) or occasionally (44%), compared with 81% (27% frequently, 54% occasionally) in schools with moderate socioeconomic challenges, and 80% (21% frequently, 59% occasionally) in schools with fewer socioeconomic challenges. Teachers in schools with fewer barriers were more likely to experience such behaviours occasionally rather than frequently.

Two-thirds of teachers indicated that their school had an effective process for managing extreme behaviour

As shown in Figure 34, two items explored teachers' perceptions of their schools' management of extreme student behaviours. These items, also included in the 2019 survey, were slightly modified in 2024, with a change to the response scale (replacing the 2019 "not sure" option with "neutral").

In 2024, around two-thirds of teachers (64%) indicated that their school had an effective process for managing extreme behaviour, a decline from 74% in 2019. The drop in agreement was mainly driven by the decrease in the proportion who "strongly agreed" (15%, falling from 26% in 2019).

Meanwhile, 58% of teachers indicated that they wanted more help to manage students' extreme behaviours in ways that keep themselves,[37] other students, and staff safe, down from 69% in 2019. One-fifth of teachers disagreed or strongly disagreed that they wanted more help (a drop from 27% in 2019). The decline in both agreement and disagreement may reflect the slight wording change or the replacement of the "not sure" option (selected by 4% in 2019) with "neutral" (selected by 23% in 2024), rather than a true reduction in need.

Viewed alongside findings related to bullying and racist or discriminatory behaviours, these results highlight an ongoing and pressing need for schools to strengthen their capacity to manage a range of challenging behaviours. Doing so is essential to safeguarding both student and teacher wellbeing as well as the broader learning environment.

FIGURE 34 **Teachers' views about managing extreme student behaviour at school**

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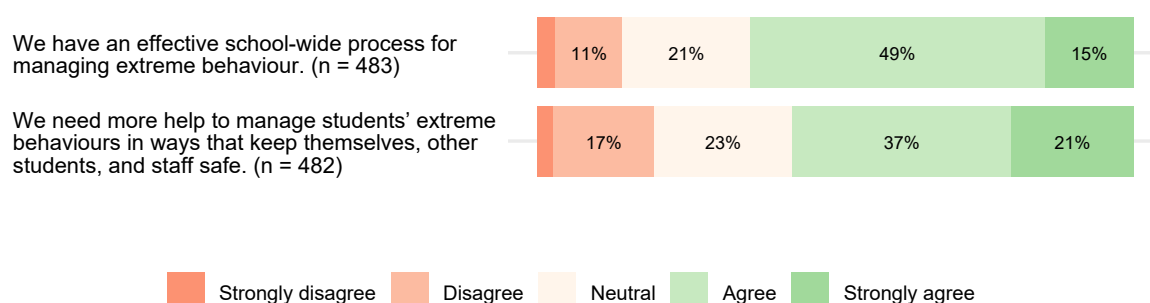
37 The word "themselves" was not included in the 2019 item.

Te tautoko me ngā rauemi | Support and resourcing

The Support and resourcing domain of the teacher survey explored teachers' experiences of and perspectives on their PLD. Teachers were invited to reflect on their past PLD experiences, such as the opportunities and practical help they received from PLD.

Additionally, in response to the broader efforts to enhance the education workforce within Aotearoa New Zealand (McChesney et al., 2024), the 2024 national survey introduced a question asking teachers about areas they would like to receive future PLD on. A targeted question was also introduced for early career teachers, focusing on the support they received during the early stages of their teaching journey.

Experiences of professional learning

Teachers were asked to reflect on their PLD experiences over the past 5 years (the time since the last national survey of primary schools). Three questions were included, with a focus on: 1) teachers' growth in understanding and reflective practices; 2) their views on the opportunities provided through PLD; and 3) the practical help provided by PLD. Most of these items were included in previous survey cycles, with minor wording adjustments and a change to the response scale, as outlined below.

PLD has grown teachers' ability to use culturally sustaining pedagogies, but challenges remain in accessing specialist advice outside the school

Figure 35 presents teachers' responses to items on their growth in understanding and reflective practice related to their PLD experience. These items are part of a set of questions asked in 2019, with two of them having minor wording changes and a scale change (replacing the "not sure" option in 2019 with "neutral" in 2024):

- "My understanding of and ability to use culturally sustaining pedagogies has grown".[38]
- "I have critically reflected on and changed school and teaching practices that perpetuate inequities".[39]

A similar pattern was observed across both items, which indicates that teachers continue to engage positively with PLD focused on culturally sustaining pedagogies and equity-focused reflection. Regarding the item on "culturally sustaining pedagogies", while the proportion of teachers who "strongly agreed" declined (16%, down from 27%), this was offset by a notable rise in those who "agreed" (66%, up from 50%), leading to an increase in overall agreement (82% agreement, up from 77% in 2019). The trend toward more positive perceptions is further supported by a decline in disagreement, from 16% in 2019 to just 2% in 2024, although the new "neutral" option (16%, compared with 5% choosing "not sure" in 2019) may have partly contributed to this change.

Similar to 2019, 71% of teachers indicated that they had critically reflected on and changed practices that perpetuate inequities. A shift in response strength was again evident: "strongly agree" fell from 23% to 13% in 2024, while "agree" increased from 47% to 58% in 2024. Disagreement also declined from 21% in 2019 to only 5% in 2024, with 25% being "neutral" (compared with 9% choosing "not sure" in 2019).

The wording and scale of the other two items remained unchanged from the 2019 survey, allowing direct comparison across years. Most teachers (79%) indicated that they had been challenged to

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38 In 2019, this item read "Our PLD enables us to grow our understanding and ability to use culturally responsive pedagogies".
39 In 2019, this item read "Our PLD enables us to critically reflect on and change school and teaching practices that perpetuate inequities".

rethink assumptions about what their students can do, matching the overall agreement rate from 2019. The disagreement rate also remained stable. However, as with previous items, the strength of agreement shifted from "strongly agree" (14%, down from 23%) to "agree" (65%, up from 56%), suggesting that intensity of endorsement has softened.

The item with the lowest level of agreement (41%) was: "I have been able to easily access helpful specialist advice outside the school when I need it". This figure is aligned with 2019 results, with 26% of teachers disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, which points to a consistent gap in support beyond the school setting—a concern that may be limiting teachers' ability to act on their learning and further develop practice in response to complex challenges.

FIGURE 35 **Teachers' experiences of PLD over the past 5 years**
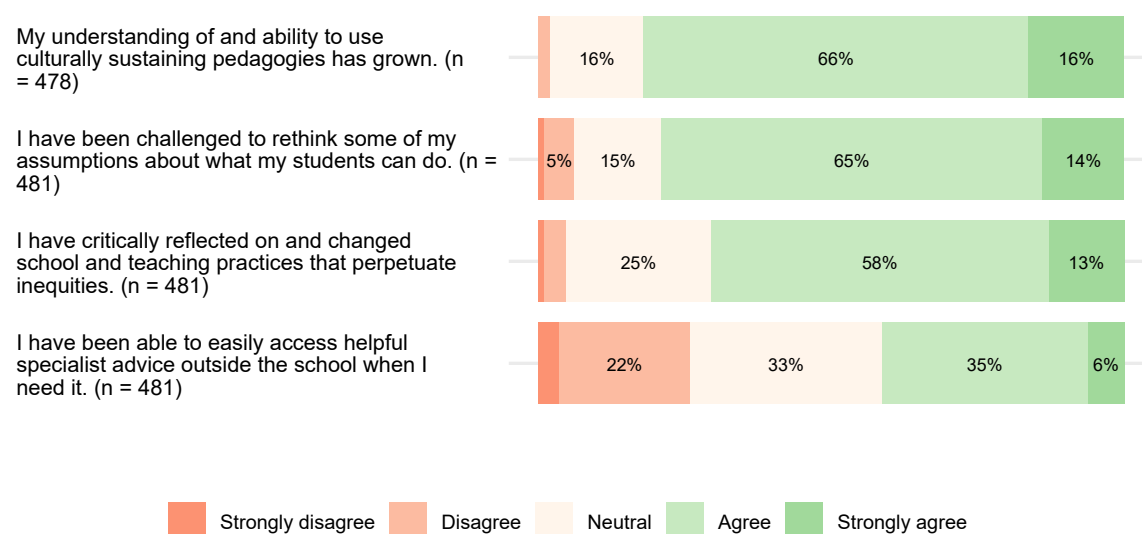
Compared with 2019, fewer teachers reported opportunities to explore the ideas and theory underpinning new approaches and engage with teachers in other schools

Teachers were asked about the PLD opportunities they had experienced over the past 5 years. Most teachers (71%, similar to 2019) thought they had good opportunities to see and discuss the work of teachers in their own school when they wanted to do things differently. However, while overall agreement remained steady, there was a notable shift in the strength of that agreement: the proportion who "strongly agreed" declined from 25% in 2019 to 14% in 2024, while those who "agreed" increased from 45% to 57%. Neutral and disagreement rates remained stable.

In contrast, two other items showed a decline in overall agreement, primarily due to a sharp drop in "strongly agree" responses. Just over half of the teachers (55%, down from 65% in 2019) indicated that they had good opportunities to deeply explore the ideas and theory underpinning new approaches, with strong agreement falling from 21% to just 9%. Fewer teachers (35%, down from 46% in 2019) felt they had the opportunity to see and discuss the work of teachers in other schools, with strong agreement dropping from 13% to 5%.

These findings highlight a mixed picture regarding PLD opportunities. Intra-school collaboration remains accessible to most teachers, although the drop in strong agreement suggests that there is a change in how such opportunities are perceived. Of greater note is the decline in access to deeper,

theory-based professional learning and cross-school collaboration, which are vital for innovation and sustained pedagogical growth.

FIGURE 36 **Teachers' views of opportunities provided by PLD over the past 5 years**
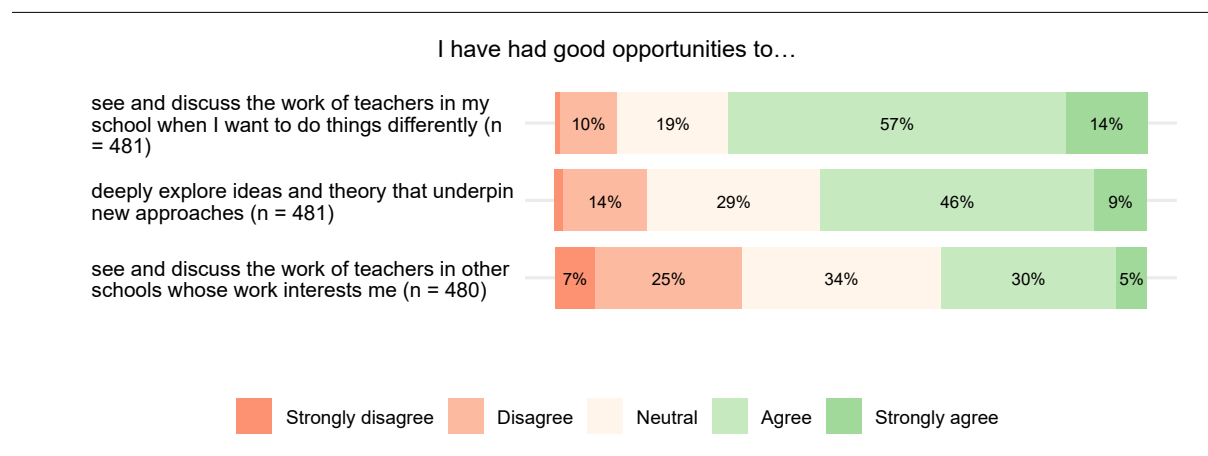
I have had good opportunities to…

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
see and discuss the work of teachers in my school when I want to do things differently (n = 481)	10%	19%		57%	14%
deeply explore ideas and theory that underpin new approaches (n = 481)	14%	29%		46%	9%
see and discuss the work of teachers in other schools whose work interests me (n = 480)	7%	25%	34%	30%	5%

A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' responses to the item "I have had good opportunities to see and discuss the work of teachers in my school when I want to do things differently". Teachers in full primary schools were slightly less likely to report agreement (68%) than those in contributing schools (74%) and intermediate schools (74%).

PLD provided practical help with tikanga Māori, te reo Māori, and teaching ākonga Māori for most teachers, but fewer than half reported practical help for teaching Pacific students

This question focused on the practical support teachers received from their PLD over the past 5 years. When interpreting the results, it is important to note that the question does not ask whether teachers received PLD on each topic. As such, a negative response could mean either that the teacher did not receive any PLD in that area, or that the PLD they did receive was not practically helpful. The items shown in Figure 37 were also asked in the 2019 survey, with minor wording changes in 2024.

Most teachers reported that their PLD over the past 5 years had provided practical support in different aspects of te ao Māori. Agreement levels were relatively high across all areas and showed increases compared to 2019:

- "Understanding tikanga Māori" (78%, up from 69% in 2019).[40]
- "Learning te reo Māori" (74%, up from 57% in 2019).
- "Improving their teaching of ākonga Māori" (74%, up from 68% in 2019).[41]
- "Building better connections with ākonga Māori and their whānau" (70%, up from 69% in 2019).[42]
- "Teaching te reo Māori" (68%, up from 54% in 2019).

The increases from 2019 in support to both learn and teach te reo Māori are likely to be attributable to *Te Ahu o Te Reo Māori (Ministry of Education, 2024b), which was launched the same year.* According to the Ministry of Education (2024b), the programme created "around 30,000 language acquisition opportunities for the educational workforce and whānau attached to learning settings throughout

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40 In 2019, this item read "Understanding tikanga Māori and building positive relations with whānau".
41 In 2019, this item read "Improving the progress of Māori students".
42 In 2019, this item read "Understanding tikanga Māori and building positive relations with whānau".

Aotearoa" (p. 48), including tens of thousands of teachers who participated in the programme while it was still available.

A statistically significant relationship was found between school type and teachers' responses to the item "My professional learning has provided practical help with learning te reo Māori". Teachers in contributing schools (81%) were more likely to agree or strongly agree than those in full primary schools (66%) and intermediate schools (64%). Disagreement was highest among teachers in intermediate schools (20%), followed by full primary (12%), and lowest in contributing schools (6%). It appears that PLD related to te reo Māori may be more accessible, relevant, or prioritised in contributing schools.

Consistent with 2019, most teachers (71%) indicated that their PLD had provided practical help with improving their "teaching of students with learning support needs",[43] with an increasing proportion choosing "agree" (60%, up from 54% in 2019).

However, a smaller proportion of teachers (65%, down from 75% in 2019) indicated that their PLD had provided practical help with improving their "teaching of students with complex social and emotional needs",[44] mainly driven by a decrease in "strongly agree" (12%, down from 19% in 2019). Meanwhile, disagreement increased to 14% (up from 8% in 2019), suggesting either that fewer teachers have had PLD in this area, or that fewer perceive the PLD provided practical help. This shift may reflect the increasing complexity of student needs and a perceived gap in teachers' preparation to support them effectively. The findings point to a need for more targeted, practical, and sustained PLD, aligning with results from Figure 38, where 45% of teachers identified "mental health and wellbeing support" as a future PLD priority (see next section: Future PLD needs).

Even fewer teachers reported receiving practical help related to teaching Pacific students. Fewer than half indicated that they had practical help with improving their teaching of Pacific students (42%) or building better connections with Pacific students and their families (41%). This is consistent with 2019 when a similar set of items were asked: "Improving the progress of Pacific students" (47% agreement) and "Engaging Pacific students in my class" (40% agreement).

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43 In 2019, this item read "Engaging students with learning support needs in my class".
44 In 2019, this item read "Supporting students' social and emotional learning".

FIGURE 37 **Teachers' views on practical help provided by professional learning in the past 5 years**

My professional learning has provided practical help with…

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
understanding tikanga Māori (n = 478)		5%	17%	58%	20%
learning te reo Māori (n = 479)		8%	16%	52%	22%
improving my teaching of ākonga Māori (n = 478)		6%	19%	55%	19%
improving my teaching of students with learning support needs (n = 480)		9%	18%	60%	11%
building better connections with ākonga Māori and their whānau in my class (n = 478)		6%	23%	54%	16%
teaching te reo Māori (n = 479)		9%	20%	50%	18%
improving my teaching of students with complex social and emotional needs (n = 479)		11%	21%	53%	12%
improving my teaching of Pacific students (n = 479)		18%	37%	36%	6%
building better connections with Pacific students and their families in my class (n = 479)		16%	39%	35%	6%

Legend: Strongly disagree · Disagree · Neutral · Agree · Strongly agree

Future PLD needs

Aligning with the Government's education priorities to strengthen teaching capacity and support ongoing professional growth (Ministry of Education, 2024a), the 2024 national survey introduced a question about teachers' future PLD needs. The inclusion of this question may help inform the development of PLD initiatives, ensuring they align with teachers' identified needs and contribute to the overall improvement of educational outcomes.

The top-rated future PLD priorities are teaching mathematics and structured literacy, and the use of AI

Teachers were invited to select as many options as they wished from a list of potential PLD areas, along with an open "other" option. As shown in Figure 38, the top priorities identified by teachers were:

- effective teaching of mathematics (selected by 59% of teachers)
- using AI (selected by 53% of teachers)
- effective teaching of structured literacy (selected by 46% of teachers)
- mental health and wellbeing support (selected by 45% of teachers).

These priorities reflect and reinforce patterns observed in other parts of the report. For example, the interest in AI aligns with teachers' reported barriers to effective use of AI in the Teaching and learning domain. Similarly, the high demand for PLD in structured literacy and mathematics corresponds with findings under the Curriculum and assessment domain. Teachers' desire for more PLD around mental health and wellbeing support also echoes their mixed views of the support and training they received to assist students with wellbeing needs (see "Teacher wellbeing" under Wellbeing domain).

Other areas with substantial interest (around one-third of teachers) were: "leadership and management" (36%); "giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi" (36%); "inclusive education and diversity" (35%); "assessment and evaluation" (33%); and "classroom management and behaviour approaches" (33%).

Fewer teachers selected "curriculum design and development" (27%), "data-driven instruction" (17%), and "mentoring ITE students and early career teachers" (14%) as priorities for future PLD.

In addition, 32 comments highlighted other professional development needs, such as support for teaching te reo Māori, trauma-based teaching, and strategies for neurodiverse learners. Teachers also expressed needs for more training for new curriculum areas, as well as a need for resources to support subjects like dance, PE, and art. There were also requests for PLD time to be within school hours and not to increase teacher workloads.

FIGURE 38 **Areas that teachers want to have professional development on in the future (n = 473)**
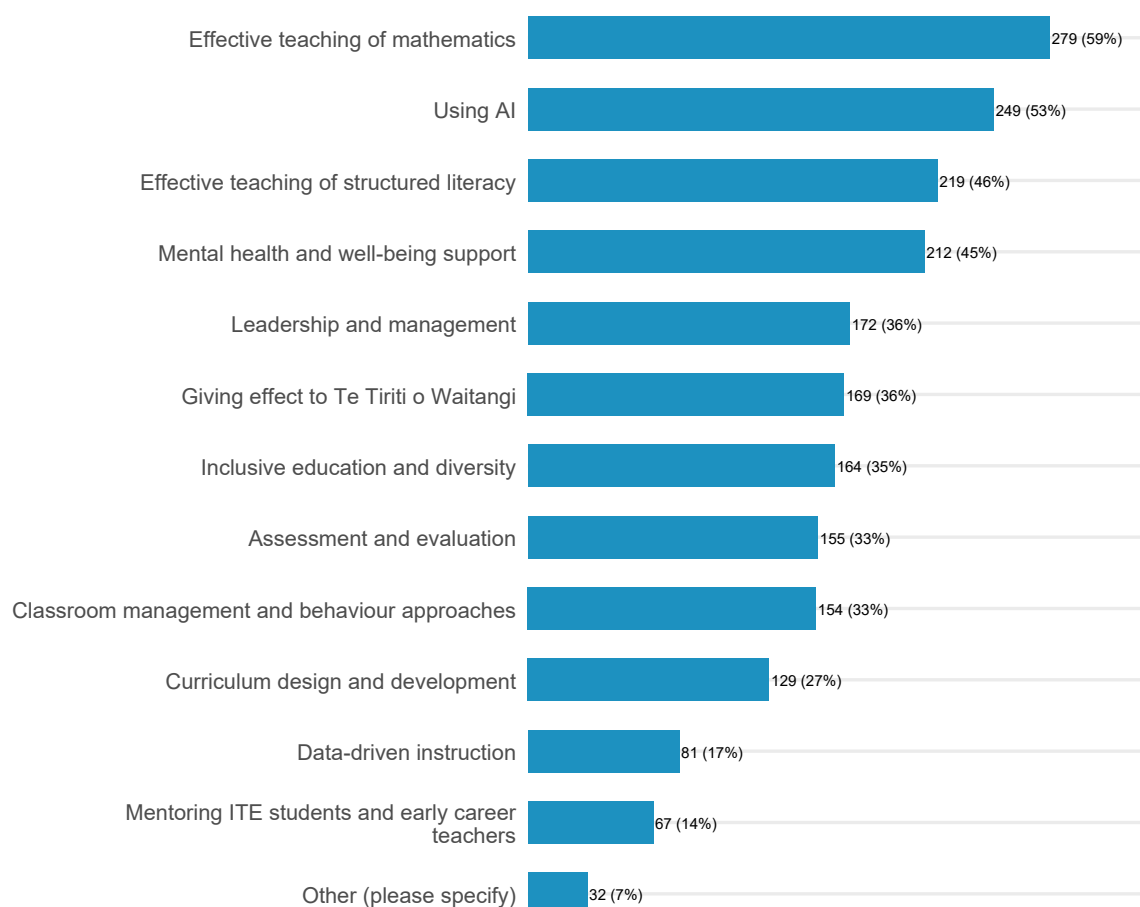
Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

A statistically significant relationship was found between teachers' years of experience and their future PLD priorities in three items, as shown in Table 10. Teachers with more experience were less likely to select "classroom management and behaviour approaches" or "assessment and evaluation" as future PLD priorities. Meanwhile, mid-career teachers with 11–15 years of experience were the most likely to prioritise "leadership and management" (55%), compared with around 40% of teachers with 10 or less years' experience and 30% of those with more than 15 years' experience.

TABLE 10 **Teachers' PLD priorities by years of experience**

	0–5 years %	6–10 years %	11–15 years %	More than 15 years %
Classroom management and behaviour approaches	53	40	33	23
Assessment and evaluation	47	36	20	29
Leadership and management	39	40	55	30

A statistically significant relationship was found between teachers' ethnicity and the PLD priorities below, with kaiako Māori more likely to want future PLD on these topics, compared with non-Māori teachers:

- Effective teaching of mathematics (65% kaiako Māori and 41% non-Māori teachers).
- Using AI (60% kaiako Māori and 37% non- Māori teachers).
- Mental health and wellbeing support (50% kaiako Māori and 31% non-Māori teachers).
- Leadership and management (48% kaiako Māori and 25% non-Māori teachers).
- Giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi (47% kaiako Māori and 24% non-Māori teachers).
- Assessment and evaluation (40% kaiako Māori and 23% non-Māori teachers).
- Data-driven instruction (25% kaiako Māori and 11% non-Māori teachers).

Support for early-career teachers

In 2024, the survey introduced a new question specifically for teachers with less than 3 years of experience, aimed at better understanding the types of support and PLD early-career teachers receive as they transition into the profession.

Most early-career teachers felt well supported and guided into effective practices
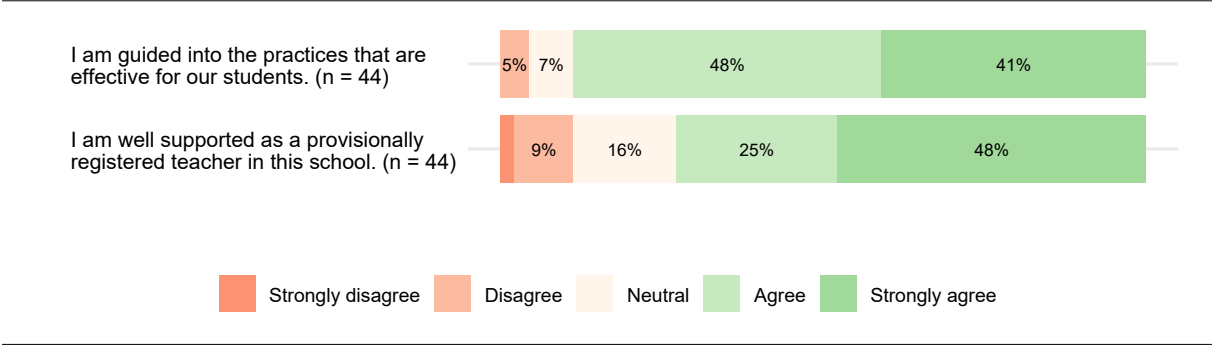
Table 11 shows the range of teachers' length of teaching experience. Half of the teachers who participated in the 2024 national survey had been teaching for more than 15 years, while 10% were in their first or second year of teaching.

TABLE 11 **Number of years the teacher respondents have been teaching (n = 473)**

Number of years teaching	n	%
I'm in my first year	22	5
I'm in my second year	22	5
3–5 years	48	10
6–10 years	73	15
11–15 years	60	13
More than 15 years	248	52

As shown in Figure 39, among the 44 respondents with less than 3 years' experience, most (89%) indicated that they were "guided into practices that are effective for our students". Around three-quarters (73%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were "well supported as a provisionally registered teacher in this school".

FIGURE 39 **New teachers' views on support**

I am guided into the practices that are effective for our students. (n = 44): Strongly disagree 5%, Disagree 7%, Agree 48%, Strongly agree 41%

I am well supported as a provisionally registered teacher in this school. (n = 44): Strongly disagree 9%, Neutral 16%, Agree 25%, Strongly agree 48%

Legend: Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree

He hononga pāhekoheko | Collaborative relationships

The Collaborative relationships domain in the teacher survey focused on the quality of collaborative relationships between teachers within a school.[45] This domain explored how teachers work together to support student learning, share knowledge and resources, and engage in reflective practice. Strong collaborative relationships are a key feature of effective school cultures and are closely linked to improved teaching practice, professional growth, and student outcomes. By tracking these interactions over time, the survey provides insights into how collaboration within schools is evolving and where additional support or development may be needed.

Collaborations with teachers

Teachers were asked to rate their collaborative relationships with other teachers in their school. This is a longstanding question in the national survey that tracks the quality of professional interactions over time.

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45 The principal survey included more questions to explore their perspectives on relationships across the wider education system, including connections with other schools, early learning services, local hapū and iwi, and Pacific families and community leaders.

*Compared with 2019, collaborative practices within schools have improved*

The items shown in Figure 40 have been included across multiple cycles of the national survey to assess teachers' perceptions of collaboration within their schools. In 2024, the following three areas received the highest ratings, with noticeable improvements since 2019 in the proportion of teachers rating them as "good" or "very good":

- "Sharing of knowledge about individual students" (89%, up from 84% in 2019).
- "Sharing of assessment resources" (87%, up from 80% in 2019), with 51% rating it as "very good" (up from 45% in 2019).
- "Sharing of teaching resources" (85%, up from 79% in 2019), with 51% rating it as "very good" (up from 44% in 2019)

All five areas of collaboration were rated positively by more than three-quarters of teachers—either "good" or "very good". The results suggest stronger collaborative practices within schools, particularly in areas directly linked to day-to-day teaching and learning.

This trend aligns closely with findings reported in the "Experience of professional learning" section (Support and resourcing domain), where 71% of teachers said their PLD over the past 5 years had provided valuable opportunities to see and discuss the work of teachers within their own school.

FIGURE 40 **Teachers' collaborative relationships in the school**
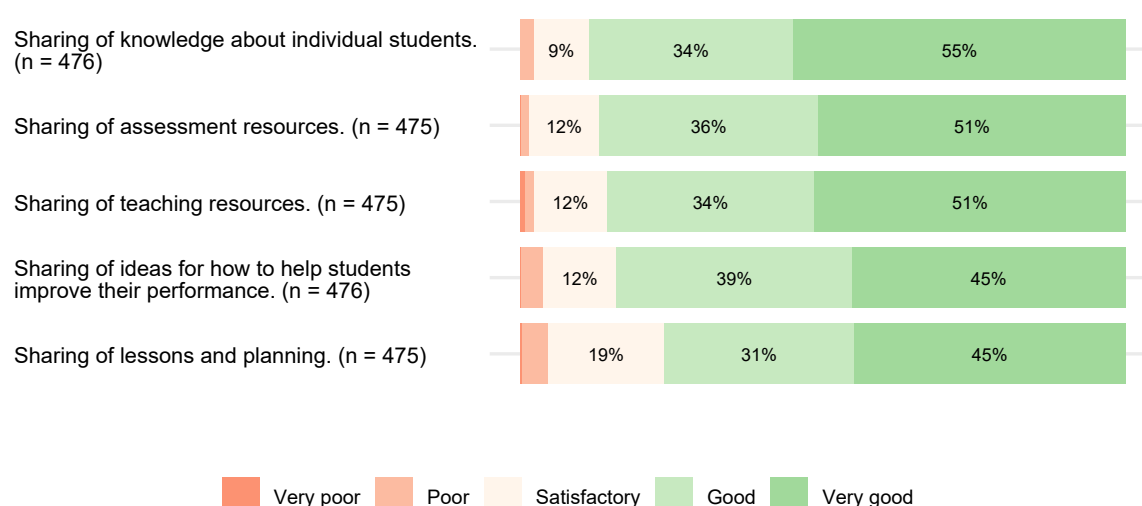
Teachers' working experiences and future plans

The previous subsections have presented findings across all six survey domains. In this final part of the Findings section, the focus shifts to teachers' individual working experiences, providing a more personal lens on the profession. This includes insights into the changes teachers would most like to see in their work, their career progression opportunities and future career plans, as well as their interest in becoming a principal. These reflections offer valuable context for understanding how broader system-level factors intersect with day-to-day professional experiences and long-term workforce sustainability.

Teachers' desired changes about their work

Teachers were asked to identify the main aspects of their work they would like to change, with the option to select multiple responses. This has been a longstanding question of the national survey, providing valuable insights into persistent and emerging challenges in the teaching profession.

Teachers want more support staff and smaller class sizes

Table 12 shows the main changes that teachers would like to see in their work, drawing on responses from the 2024 survey and comparing them with previous national survey cycles (2019 and 2016).

In 2024, teachers' top priorities for desired changes remained broadly consistent with previous years, with an ever-growing demand:

- 76% of teachers wanted more support staff, up from 64% in 2019 and 59% in 2016
- 70% called for smaller class sizes, up from 64% in 2019 and 59% in 2016
- 64% expressed a need for more time to work with individual students, similar to 63% in 2019 but an increase from 56% in 2016.

By contrast, several other longstanding desired changes saw a decline:

- Fewer teachers wanted reduced administration and paperwork (55%, down from 66% in 2019 and 71% in 2016).
- Demand for better pay remained steady at 52%, similar to 49% in 2019 but slightly down from 59% in 2016.
- Calls for more time to reflect, plan, and share ideas dropped sharply to 37% (down from 54% in both 2016 and 2019), as did needs for reduced assessment workload (34%, down from 44% in 2019 and 46% in 2016).
- Desire for more time to design relevant local learning activities also declined (31%, compared with 50% in 2019 and 46% in 2016).
- The most marked drop was in teachers wanting more non-contact time to work with other teachers (24%, down from 50% in 2016 and 49% in 2019).

The observed decline in teachers' expressed desire for changes in areas such as more planning time and time for designing local learning activities may reflect recent policy efforts; for example, the provision of additional release time for primary teachers[46] and the shifting focus towards a more structured curriculum framework.

Additionally, 35 teachers provided comments under the "other" option, expressing the need for increased support for students with diverse learning needs, better support for student behaviour and overall wellbeing, as well as less meeting time. These comments reinforce the broader findings presented above, particularly the growing needs for more support staff and smaller class sizes, which are likely to reflect increasing concerns about the complexity and intensity of classroom environments. These concerns also align with patterns identified in the teacher wellbeing section of the Wellbeing domain, underscoring the pressures teachers face in meeting a wide range of student needs.

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46 See Changes to the Primary Teachers' Collective Agreement 2023-2025 - Ministry of Education

TABLE 12 **What teachers would change about their work—2016, 2019, and 2024**

Change desired	2016 (n = 771)	2019 (n = 620)	2024 (n = 472)
More support staff	59%	64%	76%
Reduce class size	59%	64%	70%
More time to work with individual students	56%	63%	64%
Reduce administration/paperwork	71%	66%	55%
Better pay	59%	49%	52%
More time to reflect/plan/share ideas	54%	54%	37%
Reduce assessment workload	46%	44%	34%
More time to design relevant local learning activities	46%	50%	31%
More non-contact time to work with other teachers	50%	49%	24%
Other (please describe)	2%	10%	7%

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

A statistically significant relationship was found between teachers' years of experience and their desire for better pay. Most teachers (73%) with 5 or less years' experience selected "better pay", compared with around half of the teachers of the remaining groups (49% of teachers with 6–10 years of experience, 45% of teachers with 11–15 years, and 47% of teachers with more than15 years).

A statistically significant relationship was found between teachers' ethnicity and their desired changes in the areas listed below:

- "Reduce class size" (73% kaiako Māori of selected this change, compared with 50% non- Māori teachers).
- "Better pay" (70% kaiako Māori and 35% non-Māori teachers).
- "Reduce administration/paperwork" (68% kaiako Māori and 37% non-Māori teachers).
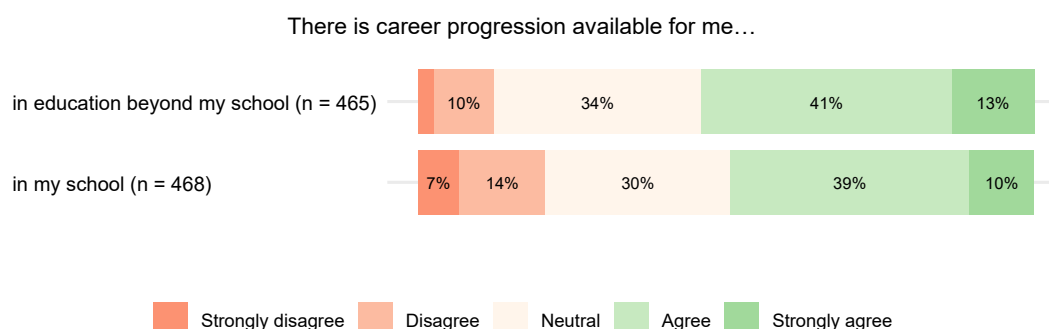- "Reduce assessment workload" (47% kaiako Māori and 23% non-Māori teachers).

Career progression, teachers' career plans, and interest in being a principal

As in previous cycles of the national survey, teachers were asked about the career progression opportunities available to them, their plans for the next 5 years, and their interest in pursuing a principalship.

Perceptions of availability of career progression opportunities have declined

Figure 41 presents teachers' perceptions of career progression opportunities within and beyond their current schools. Just over half (54%) of the teachers felt that career progression opportunities existed for them within education beyond their schools, a noticeable decrease from 66% in 2019. Just under half (49%) of the teachers believed they could progress their careers within their current school, down from 58% in 2019, though this figure remains above the 43% reported in 2016. These findings suggest a declining sense of career mobility and advancement within the education sector, particularly when compared with 2019.

FIGURE 41 **Teachers' views on the availability of career progression**

There is career progression available for me…

| | Strongly disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly agree |

Interest in leadership development and professional growth has increased since 2019

As shown in Table 13, teachers were asked about their career plans for the next 5 years. Consistent with previous survey cycles, the most common response in 2024 was to "continue as I am now", which was selected by the largest proportion (42%) of teachers. This suggests a certain portion of the workforce is seeking stability or is not currently pursuing a change in role or responsibilities.

Encouragingly, interest in leadership and professional growth has increased since 2019. In the next 5 years, more teachers plan to develop leadership skills (40%, up from 23% in 2019), take on leadership roles with management units (23%, up from 16% in 2019), and increase their level of responsibility within teaching (22%, up from 14% in 2019).

However, this growing interest in leadership does not appear to extend to formal management roles, with no obvious change in the proportion of teachers planning to take on a middle management (13%) or senior management (12%) role in the next 5 years.

Around one-fifth of teachers indicated they planned to change to a different role within education (19%, up from 11% in 2019 and 10% in 2016), while a stable proportion of teachers plan to begin or complete a postgraduate qualification (16%), or to apply for a study award, sabbatical, or fellowship (15%).

There is a slight increase in the proportion considering leaving teaching (15%, up from 10% in 2019 and 9% in 2016), but no obvious change in the proportion planning to retire in the next 5 years (10%).

Twenty teachers provided written comments under the "other" option, expressing a range of aspirations, including pursuing a principalship, moving overseas, changing their working hours, or further developing their teaching knowledge.

Overall, these results paint a nuanced picture of teacher career aspirations. On one hand, there is a clear increase in interest in leadership development and professional growth, pointing to a motivated segment of the workforce eager to contribute at higher levels. On the other hand, the decline in perceived career progression opportunities (as shown in Figure 41 above) suggests a disconnect between ambition and opportunity. This tension may reflect systemic challenges in how leadership pathways are structured, communicated, or supported within or beyond the schools.

TABLE 13 **Teachers' career plans for the next 5 years—2016, 2019, and 2024**

Teachers' career plan	2016 (n = 771)	2019 (n = 620)	2024 (n = 473)
Continue as I am now	38%	40%	42%
Build my leadership skills	*	23%	40%
Take on leadership role with management units	24%	16%	23%
Increase level of responsibility within teaching (e.g., curriculum leader role)	*	14%	22%
Change to a different role within education[47]	10%	11%	19%
Begin or complete a postgrad qualification	14%	12%	16%
Leave teaching or change to a career outside education	9%	10%	15%
Apply for a study award/sabbatical/fellowship	17%	12%	15%
Take on a middle management role	*	12%	13%
Take on a senior management role	*	10%	12%
Retire	9%	11%	10%
Other (please describe)	4%	9%	4%

*Not asked

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

A statistically significant relationship was found between teachers' ethnicity and their plan to "continue as I am now", which was selected by 48% of kaiako Māori and 30% of non-Māori teachers. Teachers' years of experience was also found to be statistically significantly related to their career plans, as shown in Table 14. Compared with teachers with more than 10 years' experience, teachers with 10 or less years' experience were more likely have plans in the next 5 years to build their leadership skills, take on a leadership role with management units, or increase their level of responsibility within teaching. Mid-career teachers (6–15 years) were the group most likely to be considering a change of role within education, and, unsurprisingly, teachers with over 15 years' experience were the most likely to be planning to retire.

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47 In the 2016 and 2019 reports, this item read "Change careers within education".

TABLE 14 **Teachers' career plans by years of experience**

	0–5 years %	6–10 years %	11–15 years %	More than 15 years %
Build my leadership skills	53	55	33	33
Take on leadership role with management units	37	34	27	13
Increase level of responsibility within teaching (e.g., curriculum leader role)	39	32	25	11
Change to a different role within education	12	25	37	15
Retire	1	0	2	19

Just under one-fifth of teachers were interested in becoming a principal

Teachers were also asked about their interest in becoming a principal in the future. To better capture teachers' perspectives, the 2024 survey updated the response options from the previous three options ("yes", "no", and "not sure") to a more nuanced 4-point scale: "Yes, definitely", "Yes, probably", "Probably not", and "Definitely not".

In 2024, 18% of teachers expressed interest in becoming a principal in the future (up from 11% in 2019), with 6% choosing "yes, definitely" and an additional 12% choosing "yes, probably". In contrast, 82% of teachers indicated no interest in becoming a principal (up from 68% in 2019), with 31% choosing "probably not" while 51% selected "definitely not". The increase in both groups could be attributed to the removal of the "not sure" option, as 19% of teachers were unsure in 2019.

A statistically significant relationship was found between teachers' years of experience and their interest in becoming a principal. Early-career teachers (5 or less years' experience) showed the highest level of interest (26%). Interest declined with more experience: 24% of teachers with 6–10 years of experience expressed interest in future principalship, compared with 18% of teachers with 11–15 years of experience and 14% of those with more than 15 years. In contrast, 47% of those with 11–15 years and 63% with over 15 years of experience selected "definitely not". These findings suggest that slightly more early-career teachers are interested in school leadership roles, and the level of interest decreases slightly for teachers with more experience.

In the 2024 survey, teachers were also asked to elaborate on their choice through comment boxes. Teachers expressing interest in principalship were asked, "What aspects of the principal job are most appealing to you?" Among the 78 comments received, common themes included aspirations to lead a school toward becoming its best and having the autonomy to set its direction.

For teachers expressing no or little interest in becoming a principal, they were asked, "What aspects of the principal job are least appealing, or are putting you off?" Among the 352 comments, the most prevalent concerns were the workload and stress associated with principalship, with many teachers expressing worries about the pressure, responsibilities, paperwork, lack of support, and stress involved in the role. Managing the demands of parents and community was mentioned as another factor that makes the principal role less appealing. Additionally, several teachers noted their preference for working directly with children and not wanting to leave the classroom; for example "I like and enjoy the interaction and the light bulb moments with the children".

4. He matapaki | Discussion

This final chapter brings together key findings from all survey domains and explores how the 2024 national surveys continue to monitor educational trends and policy impacts in Aotearoa New Zealand over time, guided by the following research questions:

- Question 1: To what extent and in what ways is the system honouring and enacting with Te Tiriti o Waitangi? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 2: To what extent and in what ways is the system serving ākonga Māori? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 3: To what extent and in what ways is the system serving Pacific students? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 4: To what extent and in what ways is the system designed and supported to achieve equitable outcomes for all students? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?
- Question 5: To what extent and in what ways are all people in the system supported to succeed? What are the effects of key policy changes? Where are the strengths and areas for improvement?

Some progress in honouring and enacting Te Tiriti o Waitangi

In response to research question 1, findings from the 2024 teacher survey suggest that, while there has been measurable progress in schools' efforts to honour and enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi, progress remains uneven and vulnerable to policy shifts.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is reflected in more schools' values and daily practice

Survey results from 2024 indicate that schools are increasingly reflecting Te Tiriti o Waitangi in their values and daily practices. Eighty-five percent of teachers indicated that Te Tiriti is actively enacted in their school's culture, an encouraging increase from 73% in 2019. This suggests growing awareness and integration of Treaty commitments within the school environment. However, the level of teacher agreement varied by school type. Teachers in contributing schools reported the highest agreement (91%), followed by full primary (81%), and intermediate schools (78%). This uneven distribution raises questions about how well the system is supporting consistent implementation across all contexts.

Te reo Māori as a measure of Treaty responsiveness

The integration of te reo Māori into everyday teaching practice serves as a critical indicator of the education system's responsiveness to Article 2 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, which affirms Māori language as a protected taonga. Encouragingly, many teachers are now using te reo Māori with greater confidence, indicating tangible progress in normalising te reo Māori in classrooms. Around two-thirds of teachers identified their use of te reo Māori as "he whanake (developing)", and 5% reported being at the "panekiretanga' (strong/confident)" level.

Kaiako Māori continue to lead in both fluency and classroom use of te reo Māori, reflecting strong personal and cultural commitment. However, without a deliberate redistribution and sharing of this responsibility through sustained PLD, leadership development, and support for non-Māori educators, the revitalisation of te reo Māori risks remaining a task unfairly borne by those already carrying a greater cultural load.

Positive response to histories curriculum, but kaiako Māori were less positive about curriculum change

The introduction of Aotearoa New Zealand's histories into the curriculum reflects an effort to align the education system with Te Tiriti obligations. Nearly all teachers indicated that it is important for learners to understand the histories of Aotearoa New Zealand, and many had grown their own knowledge.

Views about the direction of the updated curriculum are more mixed, with kaiako Māori less likely than non-Māori teachers to indicate that curriculum change was going in the right direction. This highlights a need for deeper engagement with Māori voices in the development and implementation of curriculum changes to honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Overall, there is evidence that the education system is making meaningful strides in enacting Te Tiriti o Waitangi—particularly in school culture, language use, and curriculum reform. However, these gains remain uneven and vulnerable to policy shifts; for example, the removal of *Te Ahu o te Reo Māori.*

Mixed progress in supporting ākonga Māori

Findings from the survey reveal a mixed picture regarding how well the system is serving ākonga Māori (research question 2). While many teachers report improved capability through PLD, particularly in te reo Māori, tikanga, and whanaungatanga, confidence in using te reo Māori remains relatively low for some non-Māori teachers. Variability in how schools reflect Te Tiriti o Waitangi also leads to uneven experiences for ākonga Māori. Addressing these gaps is key to advancing equity and culturally sustaining practice.

Growing strength in culturally responsive practice amid equity and workload challenges

Findings suggest the education system is making meaningful progress in supporting ākonga Māori, particularly through targeted PLD. Most teachers report that PLD in the past 5 years has provided practical support in key areas such as learning and teaching te reo Māori, understanding tikanga, and building stronger relationships with ākonga Māori and whānau. Most teachers also indicated that PLD had grown their ability to use culturally sustaining pedagogies. Increases across these items suggest that culturally responsive practice is becoming more embedded across the system.

Findings highlight the presence and use of te reo Māori in many classrooms, normalising Māori language and contributing to identity-affirming environments for ākonga Māori. However, the uneven capability in using te reo Māori—for example, kaiako Māori are more likely to use te reo Māori in their classrooms at higher proficiency levels—may reduce opportunities for ākonga Māori to experience these environments consistently throughout their primary schooling. The recent discontinuation of initiatives like *Te Ahu o te Reo Māori* may further hinder progress, by limiting access to PLD that builds confidence and fluency in both language and tikanga.

Despite encouraging signs, the system continues to face challenges that limit its effectiveness in delivering equitable outcomes for ākonga Māori. Kaiako Māori, who are central to culturally sustaining practices, report higher levels of workload stress than their non-Māori peers. These additional pressures are often tied to cultural responsibilities or expectations to lead culturally responsive initiatives. Without adequate structural support, this places kaiako Māori at risk of higher workload and stress, potentially diminishing their ability to fully support learners.

Furthermore, differences across schools about how Te Tiriti o Waitangi is reflected in school values and daily practice, as highlighted above, point to inconsistent experiences for ākonga Māori depending on their school setting. Some ākonga may face environments where these values are less visible or embedded.

Overall, while many teachers and schools are working actively to support ākonga Māori, and some policies have had positive impacts, equity challenges nevertheless remain. Future efforts focused on reducing the workload burden on kaiako Māori, continuing and expanding PLD related to te ao Māori, and ensuring all schools can consistently provide culturally sustaining and affirming learning experiences for ākonga Māori will be essential to creating a more equitable and responsive education system.

A growing foundation for system's responsiveness to Pacific learners

Guided by a commitment to equity, this section addresses research question 3, about the extent to which the system is serving Pacific students. The 2024 national survey principal report (Li et al., 2025) concludes that, although the majority of schools are working on the visibility of Pacific cultures within their school environments and practices, there is room for improvement in the extent of schools' use of approaches that affirm Pacific students' identities and interactions with Pacific families and community leaders. The findings in this report of teacher responses add to this picture.

An intentional focus on Pacific students is required

The main finding specifically about the extent to which the system is serving Pacific students is the lack of access to PLD tailored specifically to Pacific learners. While PLD was widely reported to improve teachers' ability to use culturally sustaining pedagogies and support ākonga Māori—including through tikanga Māori and te reo Māori—fewer teachers reported receiving practical help for teaching Pacific students or building connections with Pacific students and their families. This gap suggests that, despite general gains in cultural responsiveness, Pacific learners are not always being considered in specific, meaningful ways in teacher learning or curriculum planning.

Some Pacific students are also English language learners. While around half of the teachers felt they had the skills and knowledge to cater to English language learners, one-third reported insufficient access to support in this area. Without adequate specialist advice and resources, Pacific students who are bilingual or multilingual may not be well supported in maintaining their home languages or fully accessing the curriculum. In addition, fewer than half of the teachers reported understanding how to support their students' home languages in their literacy programmes. These results highlight the need to equip teachers with the knowledge and tools to support students' home languages as part of effective literacy instruction.

Moreover, while most teachers felt equipped to teach about cultural and ability diversity, far fewer felt prepared to address religious diversity. Given the centrality of religion to many Pacific families, and its embeddedness in Pacific communities (Manuela & Sibley, 2013), the absence of confidence in these areas may hinder the creation of learning environments where Pacific students feel fully seen and affirmed.

In sum, the 2024 findings suggest that New Zealand's education system is becoming more culturally inclusive and responsive, but Pacific learners are not yet fully reflected or served within that progress. To better support Pacific students, the system must move beyond general inclusion toward intentional, targeted support that recognises the unique identities, strengths, and aspirations of Pacific learners—so they are not only present but powerfully reflected and empowered throughout their education.

Strengthening system support to meet the diverse needs of all learners

This section addresses the ongoing efforts required to achieve equitable outcomes for all students (research question 4). It considers how effectively the system is designed and supported to achieve equitable outcomes, assesses the impact of recent policy changes, and identifies areas requiring further investment and improvement to ensure all learners are supported to thrive.

Overall, the 2024 teacher survey shows that New Zealand's education system has a strong foundation in inclusive values and responsive teaching. However, challenges remain in consistently delivering equitable experiences for all learners, particularly those with additional needs.

Strengths lie in a system that increasingly recognises and reflects the diverse realities of today's students

Since 2010, the national survey has asked about students' learning experiences, focusing on how often teachers provide a range of effective pedagogical practices. This year, we updated the item list to align with the updated New Zealand Curriculum and principles of the science of learning and explicit teaching. All teachers reported providing experiences for students to share prior knowledge, practice, review and consolidate new learning, and encounter new learning through the gradual release of responsibility. In addition, teachers reported widespread use of explicit instruction in literacy and frequent learning opportunities for students to engage in collaborative and reflective learning. Since 2019, there has been an increase in learning experiences that foster critical thinking, risk-taking, and exploration of diverse perspectives—key skills for students' academic and social development. These findings suggest that students across the primary sector have access to high-quality pedagogical experiences.

Furthermore, social and emotional learning is embedded in most classrooms, equipping students with self-awareness, resilience, and relationship skills. Nearly all teachers also reported regularly providing opportunities for physical activity, supporting students' overall wellbeing, and learning readiness.

As indicated by most teachers, as a result of their PLD, they had grown their understanding of and ability to use culturally sustaining pedagogies, been challenged to rethink assumptions about what their students can do, and critically reflected on and changed practices that perpetuate inequities. These patterns point to a system increasingly attuned to the diverse identities, strengths, and needs of today's learners.

More support, guidance, and resourcing are needed to achieve equitable outcomes

Despite these strengths, the survey findings highlight persistent gaps that limit the achievement of equitable outcomes and disproportionately affect students with additional learning and wellbeing needs. Note that experiences for ākonga Māori and Pacific learners have been discussed above. The system's ability to deliver on inclusive aspirations is constrained by gaps in implementation; for example, insufficient specialist support and underdeveloped cross-school collaboration.

There has been a decline in teachers who feel their PLD has provided them practical help to support students with complex social and emotional needs. In parallel, around half of the teachers reported lacking timely access to support for students with additional wellbeing needs, and fewer than half felt prepared to recognise trauma-related responses or mental health warning signs. Over half of the teachers expressed the need for help in managing extreme behaviours. These findings indicate a critical shortfall in both resourcing and professional preparation and support, particularly for teachers working with students most at risk of disengagement.

Teachers' concerns are also reflected in their future PLD priorities, with 45% identifying mental health and wellbeing support as a key need. The call for more support staff and smaller class sizes also reflects the increasing complexity of student needs and the challenges of managing diverse classrooms. These findings also align with the 2024 principal survey, which identified social and emotional wellbeing and complex learning needs as the most pressing challenges in schools.

In addition, a mixed pattern was found in terms of health education. While nearly all teachers made sure their students have lots of opportunities to be physically active during the day, the broader health curriculum appears slower to adapt to emerging wellbeing challenges. Just over half of the teachers indicated that their programme supported discussions about digital wellbeing, despite clear links between screen use and negative health impacts for children and young people (Cullen et al., 2024; Malatest International, 2023; Pacheco & Melhuish, 2018). Similarly, although society is becoming more inclusive, rainbow students remain overrepresented in mental health distress data (Sutcliffe et al., 2024); yet only a third of teachers in our 2024 survey reported that their health programmes addressed gender identity and consent.

The 2024 teacher survey also shows that, whereas most teachers reported confidence in supporting cultural and ability diversity, fewer felt equipped to address religious diversity, and only 28% felt prepared to teach about gender identity and sexual orientation—a steep drop from 2019. This decline suggests that some students may not see their experiences or identities reflected in classroom content, which can undermine belonging, safety, and mental wellbeing. These findings point to a clear need for stronger curriculum guidance, resourcing, and professional development to ensure health education keeps pace with students' lived realities.

In sum, the 2024 findings confirm that New Zealand's education system is grounded in inclusive principles and shows ongoing progress in culturally responsive practice. However, for equity to be fully realised, these values must be consistently translated into practice through strengthened system support, well-targeted PLD, and improved access to specialist services. To move forward, the system must ensure that all learners—regardless of background, identity, or level of need—can see themselves reflected in the curriculum and feel safe, supported, and empowered to succeed.

Ensuring teachers are not left behind in the system's efforts to promote success for all

This section responds to research question 5, exploring how the education system ensures that all individuals—students, whānau, teachers, and school leaders—are provided with the necessary support to succeed, while also considering the impact of key policy changes. The question of how the system supports "all people" can be understood as how effectively it enables these diverse groups to succeed through adequate support. While the previous sections have covered the support available to students and their whānau, and the principal survey report addresses the support principals receive, this section zooms in on teachers' experiences, the impact of policy changes on them, and where improvements are needed.

The findings from the 2024 National Survey of Primary Schools provide a clear picture: while teachers are making significant strides in their classroom practices, gaps in systemic support persist. These gaps are particularly evident at the school-wide level and beyond the school gates. Arguably, while individual teachers are doing their best to meet the needs of their students, greater support is required for teachers themselves. Furthermore, there is a desire for better career progression opportunities.

Teachers enjoy their work and are committed to providing high-quality teaching and learning

Central to the findings is the deep commitment that teachers have to the young people they teach. Alongside their dedication to improving teaching and learning, most teachers reported enjoyment in their work and generally good morale. While work-related stress remains a challenge, there has been a modest improvement in how teachers perceive their ability to manage it over the past 5 years. However, as noted above, kaiako Māori are more likely to report workload pressures than their non-Māori colleagues.

In addition, one of the most promising findings is the high level of autonomy that teachers feel they have in the classroom. Most teachers indicated that they have enough autonomy to plan, teach, and assess learning. This autonomy is vital because it enables teachers to tailor their teaching methods and be responsive to their learners, fostering a sense of ownership and professional pride.

However, teachers can face challenges in translating their commitment into effective practices. For example, while the findings show that teachers value cultural responsiveness and are positive about the professional learning they have received on culturally sustaining pedagogies, some express uncertainty about how to effectively teach literacy in ways that accommodate all students, particularly those from diverse cultural backgrounds or those who speak languages other than English. Less than half of the teachers feel confident in supporting students' home languages within their literacy programmes.

Furthermore, our survey findings provide an important early snapshot of teacher confidence in implementing the updated curriculum before widespread professional development had taken place. There is uncertainty about the ongoing curriculum reforms, with only about half of the teachers feeling confident about teaching the updated English, Mathematics and statistics learning areas in 2025. In addition, just over half of the teachers believe that the updated New Zealand Curriculum changes are going in the right direction. This highlights a need for clearer guidance and better resources to help all teachers fully implement these changes.

Systemic support remains insufficient

One recurring theme is the importance of school-wide systems of support and access to specialist advice outside the school. While many teachers are aware of and responsive to the diversity in their classrooms, they report a lack of comprehensive school-wide strategies to support diverse students including those with learning needs. For example, while 75% of teachers indicated that their school views diversity as a strength, this perception has declined from 83% in 2019. Additionally, just over half of the teachers felt they had school-wide support to understand and address biases they may have as teachers. This indicates that, although individual teachers may feel empowered to adjust their practice, the broader school culture and infrastructure for supporting diversity may not be as strong or consistent as needed. This highlights the crucial role of school leadership in building an inclusive and supportive environment. Leaders are key to embedding inclusive values and practices across the school—ensuring that support for diversity is not left solely to individuals. Investing in professional development, promoting reflective practice, and fostering collective responsibility can help close the gap between teacher intention and systemic implementation.

Furthermore, although most teachers indicated that they received the support they needed inside the school to do their job effectively, just below half agreed or strongly agreed that teaching time was protected from unnecessary interruptions. Most teachers thought they had good opportunities to see and discuss the work of teachers in their own school when they wanted to do things differently. However, there has been in a decline in the proportion of teachers who said they had opportunities to explore the ideas and theory underpinning new approaches and engage with teachers in other schools. With the disestablishment of the Kāhui Ako programme, these opportunities could decline even further.

Moreover, while teachers are committed to incorporating social and emotional learning into their classrooms, many lack the necessary resources or support to implement a more integrated approach to student wellbeing. Most teachers indicated their school has an effective plan for student wellbeing but only half said they can access timely support for students with wellbeing needs. As noted in relation to research question 4, fewer than half of the teachers thought that they had sufficient training to recognise trauma-related responses or mental health warning signs in students. The same proportion would like PLD on mental health and wellbeing support in the future. Findings from the 2024 National Survey of Primary School Principals reinforce this challenge, showing that, although schools recognise the importance of student wellbeing, they often struggle to meet growing needs— primarily due to limited access to external support and specialised services. This underlines the need for broader, system-level investment beyond the school itself. Ensuring schools are well-resourced, have access to specialist support, and are equipped to meet students' holistic needs is essential for creating an education system that truly supports every learner.

Growing leadership aspirations amid limited career progression opportunities

Another critical issue identified in the findings is the tension between teachers' growing aspirations for leadership roles and the limited opportunities available for career progression. While there has been an increase in teachers' interest in leadership development, the findings show that the perception of availability of career progression opportunities has declined both within and beyond schools. This tension may impact teachers' long-term commitment to the profession.

Despite this growing interest in leadership development, there is an ongoing low level of interest among teachers in pursuing principalship. Teachers cite the heavy workload, stress, and lack of

support associated with school leadership as significant deterrents. The pressures of principalship, including excessive paperwork, managing parental demands, and the stress of leadership responsibilities, have made the role less appealing. This concern is echoed by the findings from the 2024 principal survey, which raises doubts about the sustainability of the current model of school leadership. If these concerns continue, the leadership pipeline will likely continue to shrink, further compounding the challenges schools face in maintaining effective leadership.

Leadership aspirations show a decline with experience. Early-career teachers are more interested in pursuing principalship, but interest drops off significantly among more experienced groups. This pattern may reflect growing awareness of the demands and complexities of leadership, as well as a lack of clear pathways or encouragement for leadership development. Without targeted mentorship and accessible leadership pathways, the system risks losing potential leaders before their interest can be meaningfully cultivated.

In sum, the findings from this report highlight the significant dedication that teachers bring to their classrooms, as well as how they can be further supported to succeed by the wider system. While teachers are empowered with autonomy and strive to provide high-quality education, systemic support at the school-wide level and beyond remains insufficient. There is a clear need for more co-ordinated and comprehensive efforts to support teachers, particularly in responding to student diversity and wellbeing needs, providing resources for inclusive practices, and offering sustainable career progression pathways. Addressing these gaps is essential to ensuring that teachers—and the education system as a whole—can succeed in providing equitable and high-quality education for all.

He āpitahanga | Appendices

Appendix A: Survey framework

FIGURE A1 **An overview of the new national survey framework**

	Teaching & Learning	Curriculum & Assessment	Inclusion	Wellbeing	Support & Resourcing	Collaborative relationships	Governance
NZCER National Survey framework National Surveys monitor educational trends and policy impacts in Aotearoa New Zealand over time				Equity / Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Pacific Education			
Students	• Culturally sustaining pedagogies • Learning opportunities • Progress and achievement • Grouping practices • Social and emotional learning • Use of AI	• Experiences of specific areas of interest in each survey cycle (e.g., policy changes) • Local curriculum • Assessment to improve teaching and learning • Impact of NCEA changes • Te Mātaiaho: the refreshed New Zealand Curriculum	• Classroom and school culture • Belonging • Learning support	• Bullying • Racism • Discrimination • Mental health and wellbeing • Aspirations and hope	• Access to learning support	Transition between schools	
Parents and whānau	• Culturally sustaining pedagogies • Learning opportunities • Progress and achievement		• Support for learners with disabilities and/or learning support needs • Support for learners who are gifted and talented • Support for English language learners • Inclusive school practices • Classroom and school culture • Belonging		• Access to learning support • Barrier-free access	• Transitions • Quality interactions with child's teachers	Engagement with School Boards
Teachers	• Culturally sustaining pedagogies • Teaching English language learners • Teaching diverse students • Teaching literacy (e.g., structured literacy approach) • Specific areas (e.g., Social and emotional learning, climate change) • Use of AI		• Knowledge and resources to support inclusive practices • Support for learners with disabilities and/or learning support needs	• Workload • Morale/job satisfaction • Mental health and wellbeing • School culture	• Professional learning and development (PLD) • Support for learning te reo Māori • Digital technologies and AI	• Connections with other teachers • Relationships with parents and families, whānau Māori, Pacific families	
Principals	• Leading learning • Using evidence to improve teaching and learning • Teaching languages other than English	• Leading curriculum and assessment • Experiences of specific areas of interest in each survey cycle (e.g., policy changes) • Local curriculum	• School culture • School-wide approaches	• School-wide approaches to promoting positive behaviour, student mental health and wellbeing • Workload • Morale/job satisfaction • Mental health and wellbeing • Support for leaders	• Support for leaders • Support from educational agencies • PLD for leaders • School infrastructure and resourcing • Responses to climate change • External expertise and support	• Connections with schools and early learning centres • Working with iwi • Relationships with parents and families, whānau Māori, Pacific families • School attendance	Relationships with the board
Trustees	Board's understanding of their role (obj 1 – to ensure that every student at the school is able to attain their highest possible educational standard)	Board's understanding of their role (obj 4 – giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi)	Board's understanding of their role (obj 3 - To ensure that the school is inclusive of and caters for students with differing needs)	Board's understanding of their role (obj 2 – e.g., physically and emotionally safe place for all students and staff)	• Advice and support particularly from NZSTA and new leadership advisors (if implemented) • PLD particularly through NZSTA • Responsibility for property management and maintenance	Engagement with parents and families, whānau Māori, Pacific families	Capacity and capability Board's understanding of their role (obj 4 – giving effect to Te Tiriti o Waitangi) – *across domains*

Appendix B: Teacher demographics and school characteristics

TABLE B1 Teachers' gender (n = 471)

Gender	n	%
Female	410	87
Male	51	11
Prefer not to say	10	2

TABLE B2 Teachers' ethnicity (n = 472)

Ethnicity	n	%
NZ European/Pākehā	367	78
Māori	60	13
Pacific (9 Samoan, 4 Tongan, 1 Niuean, 3 Cook Island Māori)	17	4
Asian (19 Indian, 8 Chinese)	27	6
Other	55	12
Prefer not to say	19	4

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

TABLE B3 Number of years the teacher respondents have been teaching (n = 473)

Years of teaching experience	n	%
I'm in my first year	22	5
I'm in my second year	22	5
3–5 years	48	10
6–10 years	73	15
11–15 years	60	13
More than 15 years	248	52

TABLE B4 Roles of the teacher respondents (n = 471)

Role	n	%
Classroom teacher	413	88
Other (please list)	101	21
Senior teacher/syndicate leader	84	18
Curriculum/syndicate leader—English/Literacy	45	10
Subject specialist	41	9
Deputy principal	34	7
Curriculum/syndicate leader—Maths	30	6
Special Education Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO)	19	4
Assistant principal	10	2

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

TABLE B5 Profile of teacher respondents by school EQI groups (n = 639)

EQI group	n	%
Fewer	285	45
Moderate	241	38
More	113	18

Note 1: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Note 2: Our teacher respondents are representative of all teachers from English-medium primary schools by EQI group, based on data from https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/teacher-numbers (2023 data were used to calculate representation due to limited access to 2024 data).

TABLE B6 **Breakdown of teacher respondents by area (urban/rural) (n = 639)**

Urban/Rural	n	%
Large urban area	67	11
Major urban area	311	49
Medium urban area	78	12
Rural other	76	12
Rural settlement	33	5
Small urban area	74	12

Note 1: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Note 2: Our teacher respondents are broadly representative of all teachers from English-medium primary schools by area.

TABLE B7 **Breakdown of teacher respondents by region (n = 639)**

Regional council	n	%
Auckland region	181	28
Bay of Plenty region	36	6
Canterbury region	62	10
Hawke's Bay region	14	2
Manawatu-Wanganui region	24	4
Marlborough region	2	0
Nelson region	4	1
Northland region	35	6
Otago region	47	7
Southland region	18	3
Taranaki region	18	3
Tasman region	20	3
Waikato region	96	15
Wellington region	70	11
West Coast region	12	2

Note 1: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Note 2: Our teacher respondents are broadly representative of all teachers from English-medium primary schools by region.

TABLE B8 **Breakdown of teacher respondents by school's co-ed status (n = 639)**

Co-ed status	n	%
Co-educational	639	100

TABLE B9 **Breakdown of teacher respondents by school type (n = 639)**

School type	n	%
Contributing	303	48
Full primary	300	47
Intermediate	36	6

Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

TABLE B10 **Level of home class (n = 469)**

Level of home class	n	%
New entrants/Year 0	67	14
Year 1	95	20
Year 2	118	25
Year 3	138	29
Year 4	108	23
Year 5	98	21
Year 6	89	19
Year 7	69	15
Year 8	65	14
No home class	40	9

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to multiple selection.

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