

Briefing report

Education Review Office (ERO): Te Whāriki (2017): Awareness towards implementation

Date	27 November 2019
Security Level	N/A
ERO Priority	Medium
ERO Reference	M19-53
Date requested	ERO initiated
Date due	ERO initiated
Proactive release	Recommended

Addressee	Action sought	Deadline
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Minister of Education

It is recommended that you:

- a) **note** ERO has completed the series of evaluations about kaiako and leaders' awareness and implementation of *Te Whāriki (2017)*
- b) **note** ERO's report *Te Whāriki (2017): Awareness towards implementation*
- c) **note** ERO intends to release this report in December 2019
- d) **note** ERO is concerned that half the early childhood services sampled are failing to design a responsive local curriculum as expected in *Te Whāriki*, or considering learning outcomes when designing their curriculum. Services equally do not appear to be forging learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau to support and guide children's learning and progress
- e) **note** this briefing is recommended for proactive release



Attachments:

***Education Review Office (ERO):
Te Whāriki (2017): Awareness
towards implementation***



Comments:

Minister's Office to complete

Noted	<input type="checkbox"/>
Seen	<input type="checkbox"/>
Approved	<input type="checkbox"/>
Referred to:	
Date signed by Minister:	

Our Ref: M19-53

27 November 2019

Hon Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

***Te Whāriki* (2017): Awareness towards implementation**

Purpose

1. This is to inform you of ERO's key findings relating to how well leaders and kaiako in early childhood services focus on *deciding what learning matters here* and *learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau* as they go about implementing *Te Whāriki* (2017).
2. In *deciding what learning matters here*, we were interested in how well service leaders and kaiako identified the learning priorities for their service and used these priorities to design a local curriculum.
3. In *learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau*, we were interested in how well service leaders and kaiako engaged in partnerships focused on children's learning and progress.

Background

4. New Zealand's early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki*, was updated in April 2017. The updated *Te Whāriki* reflects changes in theory, practice and early learning contexts that occurred over the last 20 years.
5. Among other things, the update was intended to support services' greater focus on *deciding what learning matters here* as they designed their local curriculum, and a stronger focus on bicultural practice and the importance of language, culture and identity.
6. Service leaders and kaiako need to *decide what learning matters* in their service, to inform their local curriculum design and implementation. This, along with *learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau* supports services to provide rich, meaningful learning experiences for children, to support their development.
7. Since July 2017, early learning services have been supported to implement *Te Whāriki* through a programme of professional learning and development and supporting resources.
8. The report completes the series of evaluations ERO did focusing on kaiako and leaders' awareness and implementation of *Te Whāriki* (2017). It provides a summary of the findings of the previous reports, as well as new findings.

9. ERO began this series of evaluations shortly after *Te Whāriki* (2017) was released, and took a progressive focus from kaiako and leaders' awareness and engagement with *Te Whāriki*, through to implementation.
10. ERO's previous evaluations on services' awareness and engagement with *Te Whāriki* found leaders and kaiako had a high level of awareness of the updated curriculum and growing confidence around using it. They were less confident to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children to enjoy educational success as Māori.
11. While leaders and kaiako were confident to use *Te Whāriki*, over half the services in ERO's third evaluation were not well-prepared to implement the updated curriculum. There was variability in leaders' and kaiako understanding of what a local curriculum is, and so they were not well prepared to design one.
12. The attached report includes how ERO will support improvement in services' implementation of *Te Whāriki* and recommendations for the Ministry of Education, early learning leaders and kaiako.

What ERO did

13. We collected information about how kaiako and leaders focused on *deciding what learning matters here* from 290 early childhood services as part of their regular reviews through Term 4, 2018 and January 2019.
14. We collected information about kaiako and leaders' *learning focused partnerships with parents and whānau* from 133 services as part of their regular reviews in Term 1, 2019.

Main findings

15. It was concerning to ERO that leaders and kaiako in half the 290 services sampled were not yet focused on *deciding what learning matters here* as they implemented *Te Whāriki* (2017). Many services had taken some steps to identify priorities for their service. Few reflected these priorities in their local curriculum or considered the learning outcomes in *Te Whāriki* when deciding their priorities. While many had accessed professional learning and development, it had not supported their focus on *deciding what learning matters here*. Leaders and kaiako were also not using internal evaluation sufficiently in relation to this focus.
16. Leaders and kaiako in most of the 133 services had positive relationships with parents and whānau, but these were not always learning-focused partnerships. Leaders and kaiako did not consistently plan collaboratively to support their child's learning and progress with parents and whānau. Many did not understand how to design a local curriculum in partnership with parents and whānau. There was variability in how well leaders and kaiako were using internal evaluation to evaluate and improve their engagement with parents and whānau.
17. Across the series of evaluations, ERO found approximately half the services in each evaluation had taken some steps to engage with *Te Whāriki* (2017). Disappointingly, half the services struggled to design and implement a local curriculum and the lack of *learning-focused partnerships* meant children's learning experiences were not consistently linked with what parents and whānau knew about their child, or their aspirations.

Recommendations

18. It is recommended that you:

- a) **note** ERO has completed the series of evaluations about kaiako and leaders' awareness and implementation of *Te Whāriki* (2017) **noted**
- b) **note** ERO's report *Te Whāriki* (2017): Awareness towards implementation **noted**
- c) **note** ERO intends to release this report in December 2019 **noted**
- d) **note** ERO is concerned that half the early childhood services sampled are failing to design a responsive local curriculum as expected in *Te Whāriki*, or considering learning outcomes when designing their curriculum. Services equally do not appear to be forging learning-focused partnerships with parents and whānau to support and guide children's learning and progress **noted**
- e) **note** this briefing is recommended for proactive release. **noted**



Nicholas Pole
Chief Executive

NOTED/APPROVED



Chris Hipkins
Minister of Education

3 / 12 / 19