

# Minutes

MEETING SUBJECT:	Early Childhood Education Advisory Group
DATE OF MEETING:	23 October 2019
TIME OF MEETING:	10am-3pm
VENUE:	Matairangi Boardroom, Level 7, 80 Boulcott Street, Wellington
ATTENDEES	Clair Edgeler (Convenor and Governing Council member), Rebecca Chatwin, Sharon Coulton, Alex Gunn, Tracey Hooker (via Zoom), Jenny Ritchie (Governing Council member), Lesley Hoskin (Chief Executive), Michael Thorn (Manager Policy & Implementation), Poppy Shelton (Policy Analyst), Prisca MacDonald (Team Leader, Teacher Capability and Collaboration), Christina Thornley (Advisor, Teacher Capability and Collaboration), Sally Macesmith (Board Secretary)
APOLOGIES	Arapera Card, Annie Gordon, Vicki Hiini, Lealofi Kupa

## 1. OPENING REMARKS

Clair opened the hui with a round table discussion of what was on top for members.

Topics that were front of mind for members included: teacher wellbeing and the exhaustion many teachers and leaders were feeling, impacts of Covid-19 on the workforce, developing professional growth cycles, and ECE as tuākana for the teaching profession.

## 2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Clair provided a worksheet listing the Council's strategic priorities with prompts for challenges and opportunities to link to the priorities. A page detailing the Council's levers/enablers was also provided. The members would use these worksheets to provide notes throughout the hui.

## 3. PROFESSIONAL GROWTH CYCLE

*Christina Thornley and Prisca MacDonald joined the meeting at 11:00am.*

Christina Thornley presented the Council's work on the Professional Growth Cycle for Teachers (PGC). To help embed the PGC, the Council needed to balance providing guidance to the profession without being overly prescriptive. The Group discussed the value of the Quality Practice Template as an organic and tailored document and noted that this value would diminish if people begin to fill it out in the same way regardless of context.



Advice from the Group included:

- It is important to start way back at the values and Code, not just at the Standards. You need to build trust, acknowledge the teacher as an expert in their context.
- Consider how schools and centres use a Te Tiriti perspective when defining the values and priorities of their setting.
- The philosophical shift is challenging for some:
  - Some want to keep their evidence for their own comfort/security. Keeping proof 'just in case'.
  - A risk that someone might set up a business 'consulting' on PGC – important for leaders and communities to take ownership, not a 3<sup>rd</sup> party providing a homogenised approach.
  - Relievers concerned they can't generate the evidence in their own mahi. Different aspirations and growth plans to full-time teachers.
- 'Bus-stops' for teachers to focus on to embed the Professional Growth Cycle. Places to deep dive. Ideas included:
  - Design of the PGC – are there key questions that we can use? Working with a focus group to see how they go designing their own then revisiting to make them confident.
  - The importance of wellbeing.

Christina then presented the Council's draft elements for Professional Leaders PGC for the Group to provide feedback. The Group discussed the challenges in establishing/embedding PGC in smaller centres where the professional leader might also be owner/manager.

- Balance building positive critical friendships without creating an environment where 'buddies' endorse each other without rigour.
- Can the Council promote networks/clusters for smaller centres to work together on leaders' professional growth?
- There is an opportunity to proactively engage with independent owners.
- How does the Ministry of Education's licensing criteria link to the PGC?
- Could the leadership centre fill this space in enabling work across the profession?
- Again, it is important to avoid private consultants offering to 'do' professional growth for professional leaders. Currently, there are orgs that earn a lot of money providing appraisal for principals. PGC will disrupt that.
- The Chair of the Board can make the endorsement call for big organisations.
- Possibility of linking into the school hubs (e.g. Kāhui Ako), by focussing on the teaching profession not the sectors. Using professional leadership could be a way in here. Once that relationship is built, could move into wellbeing and other areas also.

The Council was planning a PGC Zoom hui specific to initial teacher education providers. The Group suggested getting graduate teachers to feed into that piece of work.

#### 4. RAUHUIA

*Lesley Hoskin joined the meeting at 1:00pm.*

Lesley Hoskin presented the Council's work to establish Rauhuia – the leadership space. She provided a brief background to the Council's legal mandate and leadership work since 2015.



Nothing had been set in stone yet and the current work was about who we want to be and the how would come later.

Reflections on Rauhuia from the Group included:

- Collective support of wellbeing being added to Rauhuia, as well as the new element of linking the environment/climate change to wellbeing.
- Change of framing – rather than thinking that we are the ‘experts’ acting on children, we should be emphasising doing things with children. We need to dismantle the idea of the adult ‘expert’ and think more about the who – whose leadership, for example.
- Using learners to inform leaders of what is needed – how can teachers make sure that learner voice is listened to and acted on?
- Don’t throw the baby out with the bathwater – focus on the future but acknowledge the wāhine toa who were responsible for getting us here. Particularly those women in ECE, who started out as leaders in our communities and then developed on to lead in other spaces too.
- Whānau and learners as the hub of our values – and values as central to leadership.

*Lesley Hoskin left the meeting at 2:05pm.*

## **5. NZEI & TEACHING COUNCIL ECE CONFERENCE SERIES**

*Alex Gunn left the meeting at 2:15pm.*

Prisca MacDonald introduced a series of online webinars for teachers in ECE that was being planned with NZEI Te Rui Roa. The Group provided potential topics and speakers and advice for the webinars:

- Add leadership to list.
- Include ITE in this space.
- Teachers’ engagement with evaluation – suggested as a weak point in ECE generally.
- Possibility of wellbeing being the filter that everything else comes through. Sector tired and drained. These are the things that re-energise us – the ‘juice’ that keeps us going.
- Whanau Manaaki Kindergartens are looking at online forums as well.
- Getting the most out of learning assessments would be helpful for new teachers – the value and intention of assessment. The Group noted, after Alex had left, that she would be a great speaker on this topic.
- Primary teachers are asking for play-based resources – this could be an opportunity to showcase expertise in the ECE sector.
- Could be a great venue to share new research – lots of it is not accessible to ECE teachers.
- Designing something that you can ‘dip into’:
  - Not too long – better to watch two x 15-minute webinars rather than one x 50-minute
  - Supporting resources and videos but make these optional extras – compile as a library.
  - Be able to revisit learning in their own time
  - Practical things that teachers can try out or be inspired by.

*Christina Thornley and Prisca MacDonald left the meeting at 2:30pm.*



## 6. TEACHER SUPPLY & ENHANCED INDUCTION

The Group was asked for their thoughts on teacher supply and if there were any concerns in their networks for what the Council should keep in mind for 2021.

- Struggling to get teachers in education and care sector, but ironically flooded in kindergarten. Could be to do with better pay rates or perception of less teaching time? Head teacher roles are tricky for everyone, even though kindergarten 'grow their own'.
- BIG challenge to find Pacific teachers for Pacific centres, and Māori teachers. There is a need to remove barriers to the profession – i.e. the Council was talking to NZQA about recognising alternative language tests.
- Struggle with teachers who have done a 1-year programme vs a 3-year programme: we're teaching them the theory behind what they're doing, which you don't have to do for 3-year grads. Puts more pressure on induction and mentoring programmes.
- Not hearing anything about the 2020 cohort being 'less than'.
- New grads seeming to be avoiding full-time work – not sure why this is? Suggestion that perhaps people are placing their wellbeing higher post-COVID, or that new teachers are reluctant to commit to the full-time burden.
- Opportunity to track the enhanced mentoring cohort and see what effect (if any) there is.
- Waikato Institute of Technology was working on a research project to track their graduates over time.
- Concern that some centres could not sustain 100% qualified, particularly post-COVID. Field-based grads being given unqualified roles (despite being graduates and fully qualified).

## 7. MEETING REVIEW & CLOSING

The Convenor thanked the Group for the robust kōrero and the insights provided to the Council.

