Final Report

**Evaluation of the Ministry of Education-funded
Early Childhood Education Professional Development
Programmes**

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Executive Summary

The current round of Ministry of Education (MoE)-funded early childhood education professional development (PD) contracts run from mid-2010 until mid-2013. This project was designed to evaluate those PD programmes to assess whether their design and implementation were meeting the intended outcomes, and to assess the effectiveness of a targeted approach to professional development provision.

Each of the ECE professional development programmes evaluated share commonalities, such as a core focus on valuing identity, language and culture, and an expectation that ongoing and sustainable communities of practice will be developed as a result of engagement in the programme. Participants are therefore not only attempting to transform their thinking and pedagogy in order to enhance learning outcomes for children, particularly Māori and Pasifika children, but are also being supported to work in partnership with their colleagues, with families, and with other centres/services to build new ways of working together. Such shifts in teacher thinking and practice frequently require shifts in attitudes as well as the development of new understandings and skills. Given the scope and range of these PD programmes, this evaluation focuses on a complex array of factors.

The evaluation included nine of the ten PD providers contracted to deliver these programmes in the 2010-2013 contract period. The Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and kōhanga reo engaged in their programme were not part of this evaluation.

Evaluation approach

In order to address the 16 evaluation questions posed by the Ministry for this project, five overarching questions were identified, which clustered the Ministry's 16 questions into logical groups. (Each of the 16 questions is addressed independently in the evaluation report.)

Evaluation questions

Overarching evaluation questions	MoE evaluation questions
In what ways has PD changed teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children?	1. How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?
	2. How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?
	3. How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?
	4. How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?
	5. How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?
In what ways has PD changed services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?	6. How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?
	7. How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?

Overarching evaluation questions	MoE evaluation questions
In what ways has the targeted approach resulted in services being involved and engaged in PD?	8. How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?
	9. What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?
In what ways have COPs/PLCs been developed and sustained as a result of engagement in PD?	10. How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?
	11. How are communities of practice being defined?/What are the natures of these communities of practice?
	12. How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?
In what ways have the rubrics been used by PD providers and services?	13. How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?
	14. How have the PD Providers been using the rubrics?
	15. In what ways have services been using the rubrics?
	16. How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services' practices?

Evaluation analytical framework

A multi-dimensional evaluation framework (Guskey, 2000, 2002a) was adopted in order to evaluate both the implementation of the programmes and whether the outcomes were being met. The framework included four levels of investigation:

- First level: Participant learning, including both attitudinal changes and specific skills and understanding.
- Second level: Organisational support for change including both wider ecological contexts of the services, and structural aspects embedded in the design of the current PD programmes.
- Third level: Participants' use of their new knowledge and skills.
- Fourth level: Children's learning outcomes.

Data collection

A mixed methods approach was adopted for flexibility in addressing the multiple and diverse research questions. Data were gathered in four ways, using multiple qualitative and quantitative methods, which allowed for triangulation of data, and enabled complex issues to be examined from a variety of perspectives. The four data sources used were:

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Document analysis of all the PD providers' milestone reports gave an overview of the professional development programmes, and contributed to the development of the provider interview schedule, online survey, and case study protocol.

Semi-structured interviews with the directors of each of the participating PD contracts (and, in some instances, PD facilitators) were conducted. Providers elected whether to be interviewed face-to-face or via Skype and whether to involve some or all of their facilitators. Seven of the nine interviews were conducted face-to-face and two by Skype/teleconference.

ONLINE SURVEY OF PARTICIPATING ECE SERVICES

An online survey was undertaken of services participating in the three PD programmes. The link to the survey was distributed to 823 ECE services; 260 services (31.6%) proceeded past the opening screen (which provided information about the survey and informed consent) to complete questions. Responding services were predominately education and care (68%) (including seven Pasifika and three Māori Immersion or bilingual services). Nineteen per cent were playcentre, 11% kindergarten and 2% home-based services. Most services were located in the Auckland (38%), Bay of Plenty (18%) and Waikato (10%) regions. Twelve per cent of responding services were from the South Island.

Services were asked which MoE-funded professional development programmes they had participated in during the previous 18 months – Programme 1: in-depth or clustered PD; Programme 2: national Leadership (with either of the two providers delivering this programme); or Programme 3: national Education and care for children under two (with either provider) – and could identify more than one programme. Just over three-quarters of responding services (76.2%) had been involved in a single programme: 39.7% in programme 1, 30.1% in the national leadership programme and 6.4% in the national education and care of children under two programme. Fifty-two services had participated in combinations of two or three of the programmes.

Services were asked to respond to questions in the survey using their experiences with the programme they had undertaken most of their professional development in. The high proportion (23.7%) of services that had engaged in more than one PD programme was unexpected so, given that it was impossible to identify which programme this group of respondents based their responses on, analyses of data by programme type used the following groupings:

- Programme one respondents (N=87)
- Programme two and/or three respondents (N=87)
- Programme one plus programme two and/or three respondents (N=45).

Services responding to the survey had engaged in PD across the focus areas: leadership (40%), literacy (36%), social competence (35%), transitions (32%), numeracy (23%); education and care of children aged under-two years (17%).

CASE STUDIES OF PARTICIPATING SERVICES

Sixteen individual case studies of participating ECE centres were undertaken; collectively these covered the range of programmes, providers, service types, geographic regions, and focus areas.

Key findings of the evaluation project

Evaluation question 1: How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?

Enhancing children's learning has been referred to as "the ultimate measure of successful professional development initiatives" (Sheridan et al., 2009, p.379). The evidence is that a focus on learning outcomes for children is an emerging focus for teachers; many are still engaged in the process of establishing a culture of reflective practice, and in developing their

skills and confidence in assessing and documenting children's learning. In comparison to the many references to those two aspects of teacher practices, references to a focus on learning outcomes for children were relatively sparse. There are, however, many descriptions of learning/teaching episodes which indicate children are learning in a wide variety of ways, both within the nominated focus area(s) and beyond.

Ninety-six per cent of services responding to the survey were 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with the PD programme in making a difference to children's learning. Both PD providers and services gave qualitative examples that focused on changes in practices, and several PD providers commented on the challenges they are working with in shifting some teachers to a focus on children's learning outcomes]. These are indications that in some services this is still 'work in progress'. Whilst we would expect to see further progress evidence in provider milestone reports over the remainder of the contract period, continued attention to ensuring that teachers' and services' practices are actually improving learning outcomes for children is needed.

Evaluation question 2: How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?

Quantitative data from providers indicates that between 57% and 93% of services (across individual rubrics) have shown a rise in their rubric rating as a result of engagement in their PD. Data from services shows that 93% of services believed that their PD programme was 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to their teaching in the focus area(s) and 95.5% were 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with this aspect of their programme. As a result of their engagement 55% of services assessed their practices in the focus area as now being 'Highly effective'. Both providers and services provide a wide range of qualitative examples that support these figures.

Evaluation question 3: How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?

The collective data show successes in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on children's learning, but also underline the complexity and challenge for providers in supporting teachers to make that shift. A first step for PD teams and facilitators was that they themselves needed to keep learning outcomes for children to the fore – and there is evidence of this occurring during the phase one of the contracts.

For some teachers, the called-for changes challenged entrenched attitudes and practices. In many services it was necessary to introduce the practice of reflection, and to support teachers in understanding the importance of this within their teaching role. Facilitators frequently found they needed to revisit processes of assessment and documentation of children's learning with teachers; a wide range of qualitative data describes significant shifts in the focus, detail and depth of learning stories. Finally teachers have had to engage with the notion and processes of evaluation. The data indicate that while significant shifts have been made, in some services these are emerging skills. Overall, however, the indications of change are very positive.

The data provide evidence that some teachers are more open to questioning themselves and each other about the purposes behind what they were doing and reflecting on what their learning outcomes for children were. Several services indicated their increased ability to reflect regularly and deeply on their practices, especially in their learning stories, made them more accountable for supporting children's development.

A range of factors which may support or impede providers' success in engaging teachers to focus on the impact their practices have on learning outcomes for children were identified. Among these issues of time, leadership, qualification levels of staff, team involvement, regular meeting times, and a culture of reflective practice appear to be key.

Structural aspects relating to providers that are seen to support or impede teachers' focus on the impact of their practices relate to: sustained involvement with the service, a commitment to building relationships with the service, the qualities, skills and background of the PD facilitator, and the potential flexibility of the PD programme and delivery.

The broader structure and design of the PD contract – for example, the milestones, the focus on self-review, the rubric indicators – are positive factors in keeping children's learning outcomes to the fore. In some contexts, it appeared that a PD delivery model that focused on workshops with little or no facilitator-service contact in between had proved less effective.

Evaluation question 4: How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?

In many services facilitators found that introducing teachers to the practice of reflection was an essential first step. There is considerable evidence that many services responded positively to the opportunities for reflection that undertaking the PD had brought. A change in teacher thoughtfulness was often noted in relation to self-review and/or inquiry processes. The role of the PD providers was particularly important as they supported centres through this process. It is clear in some programmes that facilitators took an intensive role in coaching teachers in the processes of inquiry and self-review.

The majority of services (91.8%) indicated in the online survey that that they had found their PD programmes 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to their own ability to critically reflect on their practices and there is also a shift in the percentage of respondents rating themselves 'Highly effective' in their ability to reflect on their practices – from 10% to 59% – as a result of the PD. Utilising video for teacher reflection was found to be an effective tool used by facilitators for teacher reflection and change. The facilitator's role was significant, too, in the process of rating services against the rubrics criteria; providing evidence of those ratings 'in action' resulted in some deep reflection by teachers. Other successful strategies to assist services' on-going reflection include the development of resources to frame the self-review processes so that it could be replicated in the future, and connecting services with provider websites and other relevant early childhood web environments.

The structure and approach of the PD programme appeared to influence the extent to which services were supported in reflecting on their practices. In particular, when PD programmes were strongly focused around the self-review process services were more likely to report adopting reflective practices. The importance of a leader in the centre who was committed to an inquiry process and to leading the team contributed to improved teacher practices. There was also recognition that engaging the whole team in the processes, which had traditionally been the responsibility of management for some services, was important so that all were involved in making effective changes to achieve positive long-term outcomes.

Factors that contributed to services being slower in strengthening their reflective practices included teachers being unfamiliar with the concept of reflective practice, lack of leadership within a service, and teachers adopting 'best practices' from other services but not developing their own theoretical understandings to underpin these. Working with unqualified staff was also an issue as it took longer for teams to use self-review processes.

Evaluation question 5: How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?

There was some indication of services strengthening their processes for reflection and improvement, particularly where attention to self-review or inquiry has been a central focus. Comments from the PD providers convey the sense of ownership some services were taking in their PD journey. A similar sense of self-awareness and reflectiveness was indicated by the examples of services recognising they initially overrated themselves on the rubrics and other services who requested an extension of their professional development.

Working in cluster groups proved to be important for many services for their on-going reflection. For some centres grouped together leadership evolved and this assisted them to probe their practices more deeply. Some cluster groups planned to carry on meeting when their PD finished as they wanted to continue with self-review to share ideas and reflect on the information gathered.

Evaluation question 6: How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?

Where providers have addressed responsiveness to children's identity, culture and language, participants' learning has often been attitudinal as well as in terms of increased knowledge: services have focused on building relationships and partnerships with families and in strengthening teachers' ability to be culturally responsive in their interactions with children and families.

Extensive examples were given by providers and respondents to the online survey of how services had increased their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture – these ranged from modest (at times, rather tokenistic) changes to significant shifts in practice. More than three-quarters (78.5%) of services felt that their PD programme had supported them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' to be more responsive – a key feature of shifts in practice is an increase in teachers' willingness to proactively engage with families rather than relying on families to approach them. Several key themes were evident: building stronger relationships with families and children from diverse backgrounds; actively asking parents for information about their family's cultural practices and finding ways to involve families authentically in the service; incorporating their increased understandings into their assessment, documentation and planning processes; using multiple lenses to reflect on their practices; changing environments and resources to reflect cultural and linguistic diversity within the service; increasing their use of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori in the programme; reflecting multicultural diversity within the programme; encouraging children and families to use home languages in the service; and supporting children and families for whom English is an additional language.

Three aspects of service capability appeared to influence whether services became more responsive to children's identity, language and culture: firstly, the impact of leaders within the service who, when committed to developing practice in this area, drove change through in the service; secondly, the need for specific knowledge about New Zealand's bi-cultural heritage and the role of the Treaty of Waitangi, and thirdly, gaps in teachers' existing assessment knowledge to effectively document children's learning and their own practices.

Evaluation question 7: How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?

Providers reported using a wide range of approaches and strategies to support services in being more responsive to children's identity, language and culture. Successful approaches included preparing facilitators carefully to work with services on these aspects, using the rubrics as a tool to open up conversations about how the service is responsive to Māori and Pasifika children, incorporating a focus on identity, language and culture within the self-review processes, using a range of resources such as *Taitiako*, the *Pasifika Plan*, *Te Whatu Pokeka* and *Ka Hikitia* as well as Education Review Office national reports, and supporting services to build links with and knowledge of mana whenua.

However, data from the online survey and case study components of the evaluation suggest variation in the extent to which providers actively addressed how services could increase their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture: collectively just over three-quarters of responding services (77.8%) felt that their programme had supported them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' to be more. Case study data revealed that some programmes appeared to have paid little attention to these aspects, some programmes had helped services to strengthen existing practices to a moderate extent, and some programmes had combined with services'

commitment and existing practices, resulting in some powerful outcomes. Where providers did actively work with services to increase their responsiveness, the degree of shift in participants' learning was influenced by their existing knowledge and openness to new learning in these areas.

Learning for participants from Immersion Māori and Pasifika was influenced by the ability of their provider to deliver the programme in culturally appropriate ways. The structure of the current PD contracts does not differentiate between the PD needs of Māori and Pasifika Immersion services and those services who may have high Māori and Pasifika participation but which do not operate from a kaupapa Māori or Pasifika philosophy. There was evidence from the case studies and online survey that Māori and Pasifika Immersion services do not always feel that their specialised PD needs are met, despite the best efforts of providers and, thus, were not always able to engage with the PD work in a way that encouraged development of professional knowledge. Different skills and knowledge are required for PD that supports non-immersion services to develop in areas such as te reo me ngā tikanga and cultural responsiveness versus the specialised expertise required for working with kaupapa Māori and immersion services.

Data from this evaluation has highlighted the need for more targeted PD provision for kaupapa Māori and Pasifika immersion services built on appropriate protocols and processes that set the scene for professional growth. Given that there are such Māori and Pasifika services located across the country, the provision of PD programmes for these services is needed across the country, not just in specific geographical regions. Thus, we suggest the Ministry consider structuring future PD programmes differently, providing two parallel strands of PD:

- One for kaupapa Māori services focusing on areas of importance for Māori (e.g., Te Whatu Pokeka) or for Pasifika services focusing on areas of importance for Pasifika communities
- One for non-Immersion services focusing on te reo, tikanga, and Mana Whenua.

Evaluation question 8: How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?

A complex set of factors influence, positively and negatively, providers' effectiveness in building and maintaining relationships with services and other stakeholders. Factors contributing to success included the targeted approach to PD which has enabled less proactive services to have the opportunity to engage in a programme. Given that findings from the evaluation of ECE PD programmes undertaken in 2005–06 (Cherrington & Wansbrough, 2007) showed many services' slow internal organisation processes resulted in them missing out on PD, this is a positive outcome of the targeted approach. Professional leaders within services were instrumental in services' initial engagement; progress within the programme was greater when there was internal leadership (either from the designated leader or through distributed leadership) that maintained momentum.

Services with particular characters or philosophies value highly undertaking PD with providers who have in-depth and first-hand knowledge of the service types they are working with. In addition to Immersion Māori and Pasifika services discussed above, playcentre and home-based services clearly prefer working with providers and facilitators who have this expertise and can tailor programmes to fit their philosophy.

A significant feature of the current PD contracts has been the closer working relationship developed between providers and local MoE offices that have enabled targeted services to be identified and, almost always, a unified approach to be taken with services causing concern to either the Ministry or providers. Providers have been effective in engaging with umbrella organisations that generally report feeling informed and listened to.

Challenges in building relationships and engaging services included providers working in new areas where they had little existing knowledge of the ECE and wider community and had to build new relationships, travel demands for providers working over large geographic regions, activities such as re-licensing and ERO reviews diverting services' focus away from engaging in PD, internal service communication blocks that resulted in information not being passed on to all staff, staff changes slowing engagement and progress, and management not providing the structural support (such as non-contact time or recompense for working afterhours) to help staff actively engage in their programme. The three factors rated by services as most likely to impact on the development of an effective relationship with their provider were time for the facilitator to get to know the service, the geographical area covered by the facilitator, and access to the facilitator.

Few services declined to engage when invited to participate in PD programmes. Reasons for non-engagement included: umbrella organisations refusing permission for their services to participate, services having their PD needs met through their umbrella organisation, services engaging in other MoE or Ministry of Health-funded PD programmes, teachers undergoing initial teacher education programmes or advanced study, services feeling that the identified focus areas did not meet their PD needs, and services in 'survival mode' who did not have the capability to take on a PD programme. Particular issues of engagement and relationship building evident for some Māori and Pasifika Immersion services were noted in the previous section.

The opportunities providers created for services to connect with and work with others were actively taken up by teachers with significant levels of increased communications with groups beyond the service, most especially with other ECE services and with schools. Services reported engaging mostly with other ECE services and schools but also with a range of special education, health and social services and with local iwi and community cultural groups. Where services have developed relationships with stakeholders beyond ECE as a result of their PD programmes, these have led to qualitative shifts, particularly in teacher attitudes and confidence.

It is clear that the management and leadership of ECE services can have a significant influence on the success or otherwise of a PD programme, either through the support that is put in place for teachers or the barriers that are erected. In an environment where access to PD programmes is targeted and therefore some services are receiving a greater investment from government than others – who are still expected to "take all reasonable steps to provide staff employed or engaged in the services with adequate professional support, professional development opportunities, and resources" (Ministry of Education, 2009) – it is reasonable to expect that the management of services receiving MoE-funded PD actively support their staff to effectively engage in their programme. Such support should address structural elements such as ensuring that staff have access to sufficient non-contact time to be able to collect and analyse data and that MoE-funded PD undertaken afterhours is adequately and appropriately acknowledged and recompensed.

Evaluation question 9: What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?

The commitment of providers to engage with ECE services and to build relationships with them and other stakeholders has been exemplary. An extensive set of strategies have been employed by providers to engage eligible services in PD, with considerable time put into building relationships and tailoring the delivery of the programmes to meet services' needs and contexts.

Factors contributing to providers' success in engaging services included: targeting management personnel to build their commitment to the PD process, using consultative approaches with services to determine PD focus areas, using an appreciative inquiry model that began from services' strengths, and having skilled facilitators who, in particular, were culturally competent and listened carefully to services' needs.

Evaluation question 10: How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?

Mixed success in developing communities of practice beyond the individual service is evident. Where PD clusters have been established and are working successfully, participants' learning has been considerable. In these situations, participants have had opportunities to break down barriers, address misconceptions about others' roles and work practices (particularly in those clusters addressing transitions to school), and to learn from others' perspectives. Having opportunities to visit other services and develop stronger relationships between services has contributed to participants' learning, both about the focus of the PD and as members of the community of practice.

Providers use a wide range of strategies and tools to support the development of communities of practice, and most services felt that their provider was 'Very effective' (23%) or 'Effective' (61%) in building communities of practice. A key element of success in the cluster group models, and thus the learning of participants, has been the identification and mentoring of key teachers who take on leadership roles within the cluster or their service. The provision of leadership clusters and mentoring programmes is supporting services to develop their communities of practice and grow into self-sustaining communities.

Factors that impacted on how effectively cluster groups developed into communities of practice included logistical challenges such as geographical isolation and distances that providers and/or services had to travel for meetings; time constraints; and coordinating meeting dates across different services and organisations such as schools. The influence of relational aspects – teacher confidence; existing relationships and levels of trust or distrust between teachers and services – impacted on the development of clusters into communities of practice.

There is evidence that the homogeneity of services and providers involved influences the effectiveness of cluster groups. Playcentre (both services and provider) highlighted the importance of their shared philosophy; in contrast some Pasifika and Māori Immersion services identified that they did not make as much progress in their PD when their provider did not share cultural understandings and felt frustrated when their progress was slowed by working in clusters with non-Immersion services. Heterogeneous cluster groups appear to work more effectively for non-Immersion services that are able to gain additional benefit from working alongside services that are steeped in, particularly, Māori or Pacific Nations cultures and languages.

Evaluation question 11: How are communities of practice being defined?/What are the natures of these communities of practice?

Multiple and somewhat confused definitions of communities of practice are evident across both providers and services. Services tend to define, as a minimum, that their community of practice includes parents/whānau along with children, and may extend to include other ECE services, schools and other organisations and personnel such as health and social services. Providers tend to define communities of practice by their purpose, rather than by their membership, suggesting that they are groups with a common purpose.

Given these multiple definitions, it may be helpful to develop clarity within the ECE sector about communities of practice, along with other commonly used descriptors such as learning communities and professional learning communities. Whilst Lave and Wenger's (1991) initial use of the term, *communities of practice*, focused on the situated nature of learning,

particularly in workplaces, it also emphasised the concept of *legitimate peripheral participation* whereby *newcomers* were inducted into the community and were allowed a reduced role whilst they learnt how things were done in that particular community. In expanding this definition of a community of practice when he argued that learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon that occurs when people actively participate in the practices of social communities, Wenger (1998) also identified specific indicators that suggest a community of practice had formed.

In contrast, the literature on *professional learning communities* specifically positions these entities in a more defined way. Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace and Thomas (2006) suggest that professional learning communities are:

> Groups of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-orientated, growth promoting way (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Toole & Louis, 2002); operating as a collective enterprise (King & Newman, 2001). (p. 225)

Such a definition suggests that professional learning communities are likely to be established and maintained in a more deliberate manner and for a more specific purpose that would necessarily be the case with Wenger's communities of practice. The two concepts do, however, share some fundamental similarities such as the development of shared understandings and beliefs, active participation of members, the mutual influence of members on the community and vice versa, and a collaborative approach to negotiating meaning, and thus learning, within the community (Hipp, Huffman, Pankake & Olivier, 2008; Stoll et al., 2006; Wenger, 1998).

A third term found in the literature is *learning communities*. Multiple definitions abound and parallels are drawn in the literature with Wenger's communities of practice; Kilpatrick, Barrett and Jones (2003, p. 11) offer the following definition:

> Learning communities are made up of people who share a common purpose. They collaborate to draw on individual strengths, respect a variety of perspectives, and actively promote learning opportunities. The outcomes are the creation of a vibrant, synergistic environment, enhanced potential for all members, and the possibility that new knowledge will be created.

These definitions suggest that when services include children, parents/whānau and wider community organisations and agencies that they are, in fact, referring to a learning community, whereas the communities established for the purposes of professional development (whether cluster groups or whole-service teams) are professional learning communities. Adopting such definitions is more than just a matter of semantics as the expectations of and demands on a professional learning community are considerably greater than for a learning community. Establishing expectations that teachers will engage in critical interrogation and reflection of their practice in an on-going and collaborative manner is an important feature of effective professional development (Mitchell & Cubey, 2003, and using the research evidence on effective professional learning communities will support providers in setting these expectations from the outset of their programmes.

Evaluation question 12: How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?

The timing of the evaluation, midway through the contract period, meant that limited data was able to be collected on this aspect. Although providers had moved into phase two of their programmes, a significant number of services from phase one were continuing their programmes into phase two; those services who had completed their programme at the end of phase one had only recently finished and thus had little experience of being involved in self-sustaining communities. The available data does suggest, however, that services find it hard to, or are anxious about sustaining either their communities of practice or their new practices without input from their facilitator to keep them on track.

Providers are using a number of strategies to support services to maintain their gains and momentum following their intensive programmes, including establishing network groups (several of which were becoming increasingly independent of facilitator input), regular programmes of seminars and workshops available to services beyond the in-depth or cluster programmes, and open access to online resources and webinars through their websites. The success of these initiatives will need to be monitored over the remainder of the contract period.

Evaluation question 13: How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practices to improve learning outcomes for children?

The introduction of the rubrics reflects the growing emphasis on finding effective ways of evaluating PD programmes and teacher development (Demimonde, 2009; Early, 2010), and the recognition that evaluation needs to be considered from the beginning of a PD programme (Early, 2010; Kuijpers, Houtveen & Webbels, 2010). As a new and iterative statement, effective use of the rubrics is clearly a work in progress. Variability in how the rubrics are being introduced and used by providers with services is evident, reflective perhaps of providers' journeys in understanding and integrating the rubrics into their PD programmes. The evidence of effective strategies reported in this evaluation for introducing and integrating the rubrics into PD may assist in more consistent use by providers.

Working with the rubrics has contributed to attitudinal changes for teachers through 'raising the bar' on what effective practice looks like, heightening teacher awareness of areas where their practices may be less effective, and provoking reflection on current practices. Including rubrics A, B and C re-emphasised for services that culture, language and identity, working with parents/whānau, and leadership should *always* be important elements within their programmes and practices.

Learning for teachers from participating in the process of using the rubrics and initiating a subsequent self-review includes understanding: the process of evaluation, of establishing a goal, developing an action plan, and of identifying how they might find the evidence to assess /demonstrate their increasing effectiveness. For many services these were new concepts.

Initial resistance to engaging with the rubrics reflects the fact that they were a new and unfamiliar tool for teachers – and also for PD providers. Therefore there was little initial awareness of the scope of the task or the level of thoughtfulness required to engage in a realistic evaluation, and some services were given the task of evaluating themselves against the rubrics with little information and/or support.

Evaluation question 14: How have the PD providers been using the rubrics?

The contracts required that providers used the rubrics at the start and completion of the PD programme with each service in order to assess programme effectiveness. The fact that around a third of services responding to the online survey were either not aware of the rubrics or had not used them at all indicates some services or provider/s may not be prioritising teachers' engagement with them. It is also not always clear which rubrics providers are using with services.

Factors which support providers' effectiveness in using the rubrics with services include: PD providers' support for their facilitators' own engagement with the rubrics; thoughtful introduction and use of the rubrics with teachers during the sensitive relationship-building phase of the PD process; joint engagement in the process with the service; and addressing the rubrics at a time when all/most of the team can be present. Some providers have adapted the rubrics to make them more user-friendly, useful, and appropriate for the particular context.

Several factors impeding providers' effectiveness in using the rubrics were identified: lack of facilitator familiarity with the document and/or lack of experience in introducing and using them effectively with services; pressure of time – wanting to get on with the PD itself; facilitators not being accessible, or being inflexible in meeting times; working only with clusters and therefore less able to provide service-specific support.

The willingness of the MoE to respond to critique about the rubrics has been helpful; providers are positive about the changes incorporated in the second edition. Further suggestions from teachers and providers for improvements to the rubrics documentation focus particularly on it being 'difficult' to understand and to details of the grading system which make it challenging to use as an evaluation tool.

The rubrics are most effective when thoroughly integrated into the PD programme. In-depth discussions between the facilitator and service personnel that draw on evidence of practice, akin to what Earl and Timperley (2008) describe as *learning conversations,* provide more opportunities for reflection and professional growth than when either the service or the facilitator complete the rubrics ratings on their own. Allowing sufficient time for these conversations to take place, particularly when working with services where new relationships are being developed concurrently, is an important consideration and one that may need to be more explicitly factored into programme hours in future. Inclusion of time to review the rubrics formatively during PD programmes should also be considered.

Evaluation question 15: In what ways have services been using the rubrics?

The depth of teachers' attitudinal change is reflected in the number of services that have not altered – or may even have moved backwards—on their rubric rating post PD. Factors leading to this apparent lack of progress include: teachers' increased awareness of what constitutes 'Highly effective'; a more realistic recognition of their own developing effectiveness through the PD journey; a greater awareness of the process of evaluation; and a willingness to engage with the process more honestly with their now-familiar facilitator.

Service-related factors that support engagement with the rubrics are: management involvement and support, allotted time for the task; strategies for involving the whole team; and a person who understands the task and is willing to take leadership of the process.

Potential barriers within the service are: lack of support from management; rubrics evaluation completed with no/very limited teacher involvement; no allotted time; evening meetings which clash with other commitments for staff; staff members not seeing such tasks as part of their teaching role – particularly when it involves attending in their own unpaid time; high numbers of unqualified staff who may lack pedagogical knowledge; and high numbers of relievers who may be less committed.

Evaluation question 16: How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services?

There is considerable evidence that the rubrics made a significant contribution to the direction and depth of the PD journey for many services. They provoked discussion and reflection among teachers; were a tool with which to evaluate their current programme and practices and identify the gap between their own and the 'highly effective' model; they often influenced a team's choice of focus and goal for their PD programme; and they were the tool with which teams could measure and reflect on progress and affirm achievements. The requirement to engage with rubrics A, B and C re-emphasised for teachers the underlying importance of culture, language and identity, working with parents/whānau and leadership.

Although outside the scope of this evaluation, the development of the rubrics statement within a targeted PD environment raises the issue of how services outside the targeted communities are able to access and be supported to use the rubrics as a tool in their own self-review practices. Knowledge of the rubrics is likely to spread beyond services in the targeted communities and the MoE may wish to consider the development of a resource around the rubrics that provides appropriate guidance for services wanting to use the rubrics independently. Given the evidence to date, that services engaging with the rubrics frequently overrate themselves in their initial assessment, such guidance is important so that services don't misuse the rubrics as confirming existing practices.

Final comments

Complexity issues

The delivery of effective professional development programmes for diverse ECE services across multiple focus areas (literacy and numeracy, social competence, transitions, education and care for children under two, and leadership) together with underpinning themes (identity, language and culture; engaging parents in their children's learning; developing sustainable communities of practice) is highly complex. Determining the effectiveness of these PD programmes has also been complex, given that the methodology used for this evaluation did not enable the 'effect size' of programmes to be readily measured in comparison to other influences on teachers' and services' improvements in practice. Rather, the generally qualitative evaluation methodology has enabled current ECE service practices to be identified and some of the influences on those practices to be teased out.

Multiple influences on services' success within their PD programmes are identifiable. These can be broadly grouped as provider, service or policy influences and may, in many cases, have a positive or a negative impact on progress. For example, issues concerning leadership within services indicate that effective, proactive leadership supports success with PD whilst a lack of leadership or ineffectual leadership can slow down or derail progress. Previous evaluations (e.g., Cherrington & Wansbrough, 2007; Gaffney, 2003) have highlighted many of these issues which still exist as barriers today: leadership, changes in staffing, structural issues such as time and support for PD, travel (for both providers and isolated services), unqualified staff, and gaps in professional knowledge. Similarly, enablers such as an emphasis on relationship building (between provider and service; provider, service and community; and between service and parents/whānau) and facilitator characteristics (such as a willingness to listen to services' needs, cultural competence, knowledge of the service, and knowledge) have also been documented in previous evaluations and were evident in this evaluation. Two additional enablers are more evident in this evaluation: 1) providers' commitment to the services and their flexibility in tailoring programmes to meet services' needs, and 2) providers' increased attention to supporting services to gather evidence through the rubrics and self-review processes and to engage in critique of practice using that evidence is an aspect that has been strengthened in the current contract round.

Policy issues have also influenced the success of these PD programmes: the requirement that providers work closely with local MoE officials to determine priorities within the targeted communities has helped strengthen relationships between MoE and providers, resulting in a more unified engagement with services. The rubrics, whilst not universally popular or understood, are beginning to make a positive impact as providers and services engage with them as reflective and evaluative tools. As noted by one provider, they create opportunities for some of the hard questions to be asked and force services to really look for evidence to support their ratings.

The delivery of multiple professional development opportunities by the MoE (such as the *Incredible Years* and quick response programmes) together with programme offered by other government departments such as the Ministry of Health – often to the same targeted communities – seems, at times, to be overloading services and impacting on their rate of progress. There also appears potential to strengthen communication and liaison between different Ministries and between local and head offices, to support services to prioritise which programmes they engage with. Finally, funding changes appear to have had a negative impact on some services' ability to engage in and progress their programmes – reductions in the availability of non-contact time, increased numbers of unqualified staff, and absent staff not being replaced when the service is still able to maintain regulatory requirements were all identified as barriers to making progress with PD programmes.

Differences between targeted programme and national programmes

The prime focus of this evaluation has been on the largest component of the MoE-funded ECE PD programmes – whole-centre/service and cluster PD – although both the national leadership and education for children under-two programmes were integrated into the evaluation process. Data collected from providers has focused more heavily on programme one, given that seven of the nine providers participating in the evaluation only delivered programme one. Similarly, 14 of the 16 case study services were involved in programme one. However, more than half of the survey respondents had been enrolled in either programme two and/or three or in programme one plus programme two and/or three, enabling analysis of the results by these groupings of respondents. As the data reported in Chapters 4 through 8 indicate, overwhelmingly the differences in the responses by programme groupings are small with few clear trends emerging. The one key area where significant differences were noted was in the strategies used by providers of different programmes to sustain communities of practice after the completion of PD programmes: respondents who had participated in a national programme were significantly more likely to report their provider(s) used online strategies whilst those in programme one reported much greater use of face-to-face strategies.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The current round of MoE-funded early childhood education (ECE) professional development (PD) contracts run from mid-2010 until mid-2013. The evaluation reported here was undertaken in the latter half of 2012 and focuses on a complex array of factors, including attention to three distinct professional development programmes and how these programmes have:

- improved teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children

- supported teachers to focus more strongly on the impact of their practice on learning outcomes for children

- supported ECE services to establish and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement.

Furthermore, the evaluation has addressed how effective the professional development programmes have been in:

- Increasing service responsiveness to identity, language and culture and the resulting changes for services and families.

The effectiveness of a targeted approach to delivering professional development that meets the needs of ECE services within the targeted areas is the third component of the evaluation, specifically, how providers using a targeted approach:

- Built and maintained working relationships with ECE services and other stakeholders that enabled them to address the PD needs of services within the targeted communities

- Developed communities of practice/communities of learners that are sustainable beyond the professional development programme.

The evaluation included nine of the ten PD providers contracted to deliver these programmes in the 2010–2013 contract period. The Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust and kōhanga reo engaged in their programme were not part of this evaluation.

Evaluation questions

A mixed-methods approach was developed to address the evaluation questions posed by the Ministry for this project. The project team identified five overarching questions clustering the Ministry's 16 questions into logical groups (see Table 1.1 below) to avoid repetition in the data collection stage of the project. Each of the 16 questions are addressed individually in later sections of the evaluation report.

Table 1.1:   Evaluation questions

Overarching evaluation questions	MoE evaluation questions
In what ways has PD changed teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children?	1. How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?
	2. How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?
	3. How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?
	4. How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?
	5. How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?
In what ways has PD changed services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?	6. How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?
	7. How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?
In what ways has the targeted approach resulted in services being involved and engaged in PD?	8. How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?
	9. What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?
In what ways have COPs/PLCs been developed and sustained as a result of engagement in PD?	10. How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?
	11. How are communities of practice being defined? / What are the natures of these communities of practice?
	12. How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?
In what ways have the rubrics been used by PD providers and services?	13. How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?
	14. How have the PD Providers been using the rubrics?
	15. In what ways have services been using the rubrics?
	16. How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services' practices?

Evaluation analytical framework

The aim of this project was to evaluate the MoE-funded ECE PD programmes to assess whether their design and implementation were meeting the intended outcomes of the programmes, and to assess the effectiveness of a targeted approach to professional development provision. In order to evaluate both the implementation of the programmes and whether the outcomes were being met, a multi-dimensional evaluation process (Guskey, 2000, 2002a) that incorporated '*process, implementation and outcomes evaluation*' procedures (Davidson, 2005; Owen & Rogers, 1999; Patton, 1997, 2002) was used.

Each of the ECE professional development programmes evaluated share commonalities, such as a core focus on valuing identity, language and culture, engaging parents and whānau in their children's learning, and an expectation that on-going and sustainable communities of practice would be developed as a result of engagement in the programme. Laid across these core features were the individual areas – such as literacy and numeracy, leadership, social competence, transitions, and the education and care of children under two – that programmes for individual services and clusters of services focus on.

Thus, in these professional development programmes, participants are in effect not only attempting to transform their thinking and pedagogy in order to enhance learning outcomes for children, particularly Māori and Pasifika children, but are also being supported to work in partnership with their colleagues, with families, and with other centres/services to build new ways of working together. Such shifts in teacher thinking and practice frequently require shifts in attitudes as well as the development of new understandings and skills.

The framework for the evaluation process included four levels of investigation. According to Guskey (2000, 2002a) in order to be effective, the evaluation of professional development programmes should target at least five levels of analysis, with each level delving into more complex information building on a previous level. In Guskey's (2002a) model, the first or lowest level involves an immediate evaluation of professional learning workshops by participants. The inclusion of this level is not feasible in this evaluation given that the programmes being assessed are in a mature stage of development and implementation.

In this evaluation the **first level** of investigation focused on *participant learning*, addressing this learning along the dimensions of '*attitudinal*' and '*learning*' impacts (Shaha, Lewis, O'Donnell, & Brown, 2004). The first dimension investigated whether there have been changes in participants' attitudes, particularly with regard to their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture, to their own intentionality as teachers, and to their ability to engage in critical reflection on their own (and their service's) practices. The second dimension focused on the specific skills and understandings that have been learned during the course of the professional development programme, particularly in relation to the topic area, teachers' reflective practice, and the use of data and evaluative tools such as the programme rubrics to enable on-going self-assessment of practices. This first level of analysis contributed to the evaluation focus areas of *improving teacher practice; supporting services' on-going reflection and improvement processes; valuing identity, language and culture; development of communities of practice*; and *use of the rubrics.*

At the **second level** of investigation, the focus shifted to *organisational support for change.* This evaluation level focused on the *process and implementation* of a programme across two key elements. Firstly, by focusing on the wider ecological contexts of services, we aimed to understand situational variables that may hinder or enable the embedding of changed pedagogical practice and improved learning outcomes for children. Particular emphasis was placed on the extent to which internal structural aspects impeded or supported services to engage in *on-going reflection and improvement of practice* and to *develop sustainable communities of practice* within and/or across services.

The second area addressed at this level focused on structural aspects embedded in the design of the current professional development programmes, namely, the use of a *targeted approach to professional development* (including *provider approaches to engaging services in professional development*; and the *effectiveness of provider relationships with other stakeholders* within the community) and the *use of rubrics* as an assessment and measurement tool. This focus was intended to enable the challenges and enablers that impact on the current targeted approach and measuring changes to teacher practices and outcomes for children to be identified, thus informing future policy refinements about the use of these strategies for prioritising Ministry-funded professional development programmes.

At the **third level** of evaluation we focused on *participants' use of their new knowledge and skills.* Here the focus shifted to outcomes for the participants, particularly the extent to which they were more intentional in their teaching, had increased their ability to engage in on-going critical reflection (individually and/or within their community of practice), and had increased their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture. Thus, this level addressed the evaluation focus areas of *improving teacher practice; supporting on-going reflection and improvement processes; valuing identity, language and culture; development of communities of practice*; and *use of the rubrics.*

At the **final level** of evaluation *children's learning outcomes* provided the focus of investigation. This analysis provided preliminary information about enhanced learning outcomes for children, including parental perspectives. It is also important to ascertain whether there have been any unexpected negative impacts. Although it is recognised that the impacts of the programmes may not be fully achieved, particularly for those services that are participating in a programme of longer duration or that have recently started their programme, it was anticipated that some indicators would be obtained through several of the data collection strategies. This level addressed the evaluation focus areas of *improving teacher practice; valuing identity, language and culture*; and *use of the rubrics.*

Organisation of the report

This report is organised into nine chapters. The next chapter provides a review of relevant literature undertaken to inform the design of the evaluation and the data analysis and discussion. Chapter 3 describes the evaluation methodology used for this project. Chapters 4 through 8 present the results and a summary discussion by evaluation questions using the overarching questions developed by the project team to organise the results. Thus, Chapter 4 presents the data for the evaluation questions concerning changed teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children, including improved reflection and ongoing improvement of practice; Chapter 5 reports data concerning services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture; Chapter 6 addresses data regarding the targeted approach to PD, including engaging services and stakeholders; Chapter 7 reports on the data concerning the development of communities of practice; and Chapter 8 focuses on data concerning the use of the rubrics within the PD programmes. The final chapter provides a final discussion of key themes and conclusions across the full scope of the evaluation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Teacher professional development has become closely linked to many early childhood and school-improvement efforts worldwide. Recently there has been an increasingly imperative, perceived need for more PD opportunities, alongside an assurance that such programmes are high quality and effective (see, for example, Borko, Jacobs & Koeliner, 2010; Penuel, Fishman, Yamaguchi & Gallagher, 2007). As Guskey (2000, p. 3) put it, "Never before in the history of education has greater importance been attached to the professional development of educators". While PD programmes can vary widely in both content and form, generally they share a common purpose of altering the professional practices, beliefs and comprehension of teachers to improve student learning. Accordingly, there is also an increased interest in research to ascertain those features of PD that are effective. With considerable funding allocated to a wide range of professional development programmes, policy makers are increasingly looking for evidence concerning its effects "not only on classroom practice, but also on student learning outcomes" (Ingvarson, Meiers, & Beavis, 2005, p. 2). Policy makers are also examining research to assist with the design of professional development programmes that are more likely to provide important and on-going improvement in students' opportunities to learn (Helterbran & Fennimore, 2004).

Professional development

According to Guskey (2000, p. 16), professional development is "those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they, might in turn, improve the learning of students". He notes that in some instances this also includes "learning how to redesign educational structures and cultures. It is an extremely important endeavour and central to education's advancement as a profession….It is a process that is (a) intentional, (b) ongoing, and (c) systemic" (2000, p. 16). Sheridan, Pope Edwards, Marvin and Knoche (2009, p. 379) suggest that the long-term goal of professional development opportunities for early childhood teachers is to "facilitate the acquisition of specific learning and social-emotional competences in young children and, in many cases, to promote important family-specific attitudes or abilities to support children's learning and development". Effectively, the desirable long-term indirect results of every early childhood professional development programme is to enhance children's learning across "cognitive, communicative, social-emotional, and behavioural domains (Guskey, 2000), and such outcomes are the ultimate measure of successful professional development initiatives" (Sheridan et al., 2009, p. 379).

Sheridan et al. (2009) state that there are two key objectives for early childhood teachers engaging in professional development. One objective is that the professional development will enhance the comprehension, skills, dispositions and teaching practices of early childhood educators in order to assist them in educating children and supporting families. This involves the improvement of a teacher's knowledge, skills and dispositions. The second objective is to foster a culture for sustained professional growth for both individuals and systems. This entails "ensuring that the responsibility for delivering effective services and facilitating on-going growth and development among practitioners is transferred from a formal trainer (coach, consultant, group facilitator) to individuals and groups of professionals within early childhood settings" (Sheridan et al., 2009, p. 380).

According to Kennedy (2011), the notion of collaborative continuing professional development (CPD) is becoming more popular and recent research indicates that it can be more useful than individual CPD, particularly when carried out over a period of time rather than as a one-off session. Kennedy notes, too, that CPD has been found to have had more impact on participants' teaching and learning, and encourages teacher commitment and ownership of the CDP.

Collahan (2002) situates the importance of in-service education and CPD within the wider policy agenda of lifelong learning. In his working paper, commissioned by the OECD, Collahan (2002, p.26) argues that teacher development is best promoted through networks or clusters where a number of schools work alongside each other on such things as new curricula or methodologies.

Instead of a "top-down" or a "bottom-up" approach, the OECD report terms this trend as "bottom across." As the OECD report notes, there is a crucial role for external assistance to the process, such as support from higher education institutes, education centres, and regional or specialist support teams. It is also recognised internationally that teacher development is often best promoted within the context of school development, and more and more schools are being encouraged to engage in collaborative professional development planning. While the education system's needs are prominent, this is not to the exclusion of the personal and individual needs of the teacher. This is particularly important where the occupational hazard of geographic or professional isolation is evident.

Kennedy (2011) does stress, however, that the literature surrounding CPD does not promote collaborative learning as an alternative to individual learning, instead it is seen as a complementary approach. In agreement, Earley (2010) points out that CPD of teachers needs to be seen as a collective responsibility between individual teachers and their places of employment. It is hoped that taking joint responsibility for professional development and training results in benefits for both.

Earley (2010) highlights that growing attention has been given to organisational cultures and the importance given to the training and development or the learning of its members. Staff expertise and experience, including both teaching and support staff, are commonly recognised to be the most significant and most expensive resource for schools. The term *professional learning community* is becoming more widespread and attempts are being made in many national education systems to make educational institutes more aware of what this means for themselves. Earley argues that the leading and managing of staff and their development has to be perceived as an essential part of the responsibility of managing the educational institute's total resources. Governments around the world are now focusing their attention on this as educational institutions become more autonomous and have a major task in managing people.

Professional Learning and Professional Development

Fraser, Kennedy, Reid and Mckinney (2007) assert that it is important to clarify the difference between professional learning and professional development in order to better understand the two concepts. They suggest that teachers' professional learning "can be taken to represent the processes that, whether intuitive or deliberate, individual or social, result in specific changes in the professional knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of teachers (Fraser et al., 2007, pp. 156–157). Conversely, teachers' professional development refers to the broader changes that may occur over an extended period of time causing qualitative shifts in aspects of participants' professionalism.

What is effective continuing professional development?

Any debate of what constitutes effective professional development need to begin by asking effective for whom. Is it the individual, the education setting and its students, or the education system taken as a whole? Another question that needs to be posed is for what? The beneficiaries of CPD do not always coincide, although in numerous cases they will as what is useful for an individual is likely to be beneficial for both students and for the educational institution. However, whilst professional development to address the latest government initiative may be useful for implementing a specific strategy it may not necessarily be useful for the overall long-term development of teachers or the education setting. Earley (2010) maintains that effective CPD is likely to first enhance student outcomes but may also result in

changes in practice and improved teaching alongside development of management and leadership skills and qualities. The CPD should have a purpose and enhance the early childhood setting or school's overall capacity to progress. Research has found that teachers' experience in a wide variety of professional development opportunities has been associated with changes in their knowledge, practice, and to a lesser extent, student achievement (Desimone, 2009).

The impact of teachers' professional development

According to Earley (2010), evaluating the impact of teachers' professional development and training is a neglected area due to the perception that this is difficult. Up until the 1990s the majority of professional development programmes consisted of one-stop workshops, focusing on teachers gaining mastery of prescribed knowledge and skills (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). However, research has clearly shown that this type of professional development is ineffective in changing teaching practices (Borko et al., 2010). In 1979 Fullan reviewed the workshop model and found that the topics for these workshops were selected by the providers not the participating teachers. Additionally, follow-up support and implementation rarely occurred and the model was unsuccessful. As Fullan (2007) points out, Little's (1993) research review came to the same conclusion.

While there is a growing body of literature concerning the characteristics of effective professional development there is little evidence to show how these characteristics impact on teacher learning and practice (Mouza, 2006). According to Desimone (2009, p. 181) "for decades, studies of professional development consisted mainly of documenting teacher satisfaction, attitude change, or commitment to innovation rather than its results or the processes by which it worked". These findings encouraged the examination of the long-term impact of professional development on teacher learning and practice. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002, p. 948) state that the focus of professional development began to shift "from programs that change teachers to teachers as active learners shaping their professional growth through reflective participation in professional development programs and in practice". New models of professional development were introduced, which included training, observation/assessment, study groups, individually guided activities, participation in a development/improvement, and inquiry/action research (Guskey, 2000). Each of these had advantages which were linked to the goal, content and context of the professional development plan. Guskey (2000, p. 29) suggests combining these models to "ensure that professional development efforts remained intentional, ongoing, and systemic".

The impact of professional development on student learning was also seen as important. In a review of in-service programmes that showed evidence of improved student learning, Kennedy (1998) established that programmes that helped teachers gain knowledge of how students learn the subject matter were more successful in improving student achievement. She examined 93 studies concerning the effectiveness of teacher education in mathematics or science, and found only ten studies that provided evidence of benefits for students. Kennedy claimed this was a vital finding as it demonstrated professional development programmes, in an attempt to move away from the much maligned one-stop workshops, focused on the form and structure of programmes instead of the programme's content and the effect this had on student learning. Kennedy argued those programmes that had the most impact on students' learning were ones that provided teachers with "very specific ideas about what the subject matter they will teach consists of, what students should be learning about that subject matter, and how to tell whether students are learning or not. This content makes the greatest difference in student learning" (1998, p. 25). Additionally, Kennedy found that other features of the professional development programmes, in particular the time spent with the teacher, the length of the programme, the number of class visits and the participation of individual staff or the school as a whole did not have any clear benefits for student learning. Some programmes of short duration or with few contact hours had a greater effect on student learning than those

that were delivered over a longer period of time or with more contact hours. According to Kennedy (1998) this was due to the content of these programmes.

Saracho and Spodek's (2007) critical analysis of 40 studies published over a 15-year period, from 1989-2004, identified the importance of professional development to improve ECE teachers' professional level of expertise, alongside the significance of having a bachelor's degree and relevant educational standards for early childhood teachers. They concluded that the research did indeed support the notion that EC teachers' professional development does have an effect on the quality of EC programmes and "predicts the children's developmental outcomes" (p. 86). In their recently released report on EC teachers' work in New Zealand education and care centres, Meade et al. (2012) highlight recent studies that also identified the effects of greater teacher training and qualifications, and its connection to quality of provision. For one study examined, they point out that even though teachers were "successful in developing practice and staff confidence and competence, which impacted positively on outcomes for children, a moderating factor in their success was the qualifications of the staff" (Meade et al., 2012, p. 22). Meade et al.'s (2012) research found that centres with 50-79% qualified staff highlighted the importance of professional learning for teachers: "Interviewees in this category said that they needed to invest more in professional development in order to help their unqualified staff understand and use good practice" (p. 17).

To date a number of models have been used to evaluate the impact of training and development. One of the first frameworks was developed by Kirkpatrick in 1959, and has served as the main organising design for profit-based organisations over a long period of time (Bates, 2004). This four-step framework is used to explore the relationship between training and the workplace: reactions, learning, behaviour and results. Each are measured at certain points throughout the training period, with the first three associated with the training itself and the fourth concerned with the effectiveness of the training for the organisation (Earley, 2010).

Guskey (2000) further developed and refined Kirkpatrick's model in relation to education. He strongly emphasised that an integral part of the professional development process was evaluation, stating that "systematically gathering and analysing evidence to inform our actions must become a central component in professional development technology" (p. 92).

Guskey (2000) proposed five critical levels of continuing professional development evaluation to improve student outcomes. These are as follows:

1. Participants' reactions
   - This is the most common type of professional development evaluation, and the easiest way to gather and analyse information. These evaluations are usually done at the end of a session.

2. Participants' learning
   - This involves measuring what participants gained from the PD in terms of knowledge, skills and possibly attitudes. The evaluation is linked to the learning goals of the PD.

3. Organisational structure and support
   - This level is not included in the Kirkpatrick model and refers to the key role that educational institutions can play in the success or failure of any professional development efforts. Guskey (2002a) points out that the focus should be on the attributes and organisational features of the setting that are necessary for success. For example, were the changes at the individual level promoted and encouraged at all levels? Were there adequate resources provided, including time for sharing and critical reflection? Were the successes of the professional development recognised and shared? Guskey (2002a) suggests that such issues can be most important to the success of the professional development programme.

4. Participants' use of new skills and knowledge
   - Guskey (2002a) identified that the key question for this level is what did the participants learn to make a difference to their professional practice? Very clear indicators are required in order to evaluate the degree and quality of the professional development programme. Unlike levels 1 and 2, data for this level needs to be collected before the professional development is finished.

5. Outcomes for children
   - This level evaluates the impact that the professional development had on children. The evaluation process can be done in a variety of ways. Of interest, Guskey (2002a) states that in some instances the information gathered about outcomes for children is used to estimate how cost effective the professional development was.

If the overall purpose of continuing professional development is to enhance early childhood teachers' practices and learning and thereby impact positively on the learning outcomes of children then it is vital to have evaluation processes in place to give an indication of whether this is occurring or not. Evaluation needs to be considered at the beginning, rather than at the end of a professional development programme (Earley, 2010; Kuijpers, Houtveen & Webbels, 2010).

Chapter 3: Methodology

This evaluation drew upon Guskey's (2000, 2002a) framework in order to ensure that core aspects necessary for effective professional development were addressed. A mixed methods approach was utilised with data collection comprising analyses of provider milestone reports, interviews with contract directors (and at times, facilitators), an online survey of services that had participated in the professional development programmes to date, and case studies of 16 ECE services. This chapter of the report outlines the rationale behind each of the data collection methods used, together with demographic details of participants within each data collection strategy.

Mixed methods approach

A mixed methods approach was adopted for this project, given its flexibility in addressing the multiple and diverse research questions (Creemers, Kyriakides & Sammons, 2010; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009) posed for this evaluation. Mixed methods enable findings that go beyond the sum of the qualitative and quantitative components to be elicited, producing knowledge that is helpful in understanding social phenomena, such as educational effectiveness. The use of multiple qualitative and quantitative methods allows for triangulation of data, and enables complex issues to be examined from a variety of perspectives for a more comprehensive understanding (Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). Newby (2010) argues that research issues in education are so complex that combining quantitative and qualitative methods is essential to ensure widespread coverage of knowledge.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The first phase in the evaluation was to undertake document analyses of milestone reports prepared by providers. These analyses enabled the evaluation team to gain an overview of the professional development programmes and the particular contribution of each contractor to the programmes. Although smaller in scale than milestone reports prepared in earlier ECE PD contracts, our analyses revealed that the milestones were a useful source of data for several of the evaluation questions. In addition, these analyses informed the development of the online survey instrument and the protocols for both the contract director interviews and selected case studies. In addition, an analysis of the websites of the two national programmes was undertaken.

INTERVIEWS WITH CONTRACT PROVIDERS

In this second phase of the project semi-structured interviews with the contract directors (and, in some instances, PD facilitators) of the programmes were conducted. Semi-structured interviews using a list of pre-prepared questions to guide the interview were selected as they allowed for in-depth exploration of the issues underlying the evaluation questions and for probing and elaboration of responses (Lankshear & Knobel, 2005; Tomal, 2010). Clough and Nutbrown (2007) note that semi-structured interviews enable participants to share meaningful, rich stories that provide the researcher with ample and sufficient information, not always possible with other data collection methods. Semi-structured interviews are also flexible (Newby, 2010), allowing for questions to be re-phrased where necessary for understanding and can be undertaken face-to-face, by phone or by video link.

Directors were invited to participate in the interview using their preference for a face-to-face or web-cam interview and chose whether to involve their facilitators in the interview process. This approach enabled contract directors to engage in the interview process in the manner that they were most comfortable with, in order to build a positive relationship between them and the interviewer. Seven of the nine interviews undertaken were conducted face-to-face, usually at the provider's workplace. One was undertaken using a Skype call whilst the last interview was undertaken by telephone conference call, following difficulties with using Skype for the call.

Three interviews were undertaken with contract directors only (although each of these directors also undertook facilitation work within their respective contracts); the remaining six interviews also involved between one and six facilitators in addition to the contract director. Two interviews included senior staff from the organisation who, although not directly involved in the delivery of the PD programmes, had organisational oversight for the contract. Interviews were undertaken by two members of the evaluation team (Cherrington and Glasgow) and were between one and two hours in duration. Each interview was audio-recorded and then transcribed. The interview schedule is provided as Appendix A.

The purpose of the interviews was twofold: first, to gather provider perspectives on the extent to which the programme(s) for which they are responsible were meeting the programme aims of *improving teacher practice; supporting on-going reflection and improvement processes; valuing identity, language and culture*; and *developing communities of practice.* In addition, the interviews enabled directors' and facilitators' perspectives on the use of *the targeted approach model* and the *use of the rubrics* for assessing the impact of the professional programmes on services' practices to be explored.

ONLINE SURVEY OF PARTICIPATING ECE SERVICES

In order to obtain data from a broad spectrum of the services that have participated in professional development through one or more of the three programmes, an online survey using Qualtric online software was undertaken. Surveys are well recognised for their ease of administration and ability to generate data from large populations (Newby, 2010; Tomal, 2010). In particular, online surveys are efficient as they decrease the response time significantly and are easy for respondents to access. As such, online surveys are beneficial for projects with a short time frame as was the case with this evaluation.

PD providers were requested to provide details for each ECE service (service name, contact details and PD focus area) that had participated in in-depth professional development within their programmes. Data received from providers was checked and entered into a spreadsheet. Where necessary, individual services were contacted to confirm details such as their email addresses. In particular this occurred where one email address was provided for multiple services as the online survey software allowed for only one response from each individual email address. In total, the survey link was distributed to 823 ECE services via email; of these 14 emails were distributed where our records indicated that multiple services were still using a single email address despite our requests for separate email addresses for each service. Follow-up reminder emails were sent on two occasions.

Services were invited to complete the survey as a team, rather than one representative of the team completing the questionnaire on behalf of their colleagues. This approach enabled broader perspectives across the service to be elicited, reflecting collective approaches to practice and the team's involvement as a community of practice within the programme. It also provided an opportunity for teams to engage in collective discussion and reflection about their progress as a result of their professional development programme.

The survey was designed to yield both quantitative and qualitative data concerning shifts in teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and practices in relation to both the PD focus area and in relation to the *development of on-going reflection and improvement processes; teacher and service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture; development of communities of practice* and *use of the rubrics*. In addition, the survey gathered data on the effectiveness of different PD delivery models used within the three programmes. The survey was divided into nine sections addressing the evaluation questions and comprised 33 quantitative questions (several of which allowed for additional text entries) and eight questions that allowed respondents to provide qualitative data. The survey instrument is provided as Appendix B.

Survey respondents

Two hundred and ninety-nine services (36.3%) opened the link to the survey. The first screen of the survey provided services with information about the survey, including ethical aspects and informed consent, and some services did not proceed beyond this point. The data below provide demographic details of the responding services.

Table 3.1:   Survey respondents

Service type	Response	Percentage
Education & Care Centre	176	68%
Home-based service	5	2%
Kindergarten	29	11%
Playcentre	50	19%
Total	260	100%

Almost all of the 176 education and care services offered full-day programmes and there was a relatively even split between community-based and privately owned centres. A number of services indicated that they were Māori Immersion or bilingual (N=3), Pacific Language Nests (N=7), Montessori (N=3), Steiner (N=1) or of special character (N=3). Three-quarters (N=22) of the kindergarten respondents offered full-day rather than sessional programmes.

Services that responded as teacher-led services were asked which funding band they were currently funded at. Table 3.2 identifies that more than 80% of responding services were currently at the 80%+ funding band whilst less than 4% were in the lowest two funding bands (25 – 49% and 1 – 24% qualified and registered teachers).

Table 3.2:   Teacher-led centre-based services by funding bands

Funding band	Number	Percentage
80%+ qualified and registered teachers	158	82%
50–79% qualified and registered teachers	28	15%
25–49% qualified and registered teachers	5	3%
0–24% qualified and registered teachers	1	1%
Total	192	100%

Playcentre and home-based services were asked to identify if they were funded on the quality or standard funding bands. Table 3.3 shows that almost four-fifths of ECE services funded this way were on the standard funding band.

Table 3.3:   Playcentre and home-based services by funding bands

Funding band	Number	Percentage
Quality funding level	8	21%
Standard funding level	31	79%
Total	39	100%

Responding services were asked to identify their geographic region (see Table 3.4). Of the 242 services who responded to this question, most were in the Auckland (38%), Bay of Plenty (18%) and Waikato (10%) regions. Twelve percent of responding services were from the South Island.

Table 3.4:   Geographical location of responding services

Region	Number	Percentage
Northland	18	7%
Auckland	91	38%
Waikato	23	10%
Taranaki	3	1%
Bay of Plenty	43	18%
Gisborne	8	3%
Hawkes Bay	0	0%
Manawatu/Whanganui	9	4%
Wellington	17	7%
Tasman/Nelson/Marlborough	6	2%
Canterbury	15	6%
West Coast	3	1%
Otago	4	2%
Southland	2	1%
Total	242	100%

Services were asked about the number of children that they were licensed for, and about the number of children currently enrolled in their service. Data reported in Table 3.5 indicates a wide spread in the size of services, based on their licenses. Greater numbers of children were enrolled in services licensed for 50–99 children, likely to be reflective of part-time and sessional enrolments.

Table 3.5:   Number of children attending responding ECE services

	Number of children service licensed for						
	Less than 20	20–29	30–39	40–49	50-99	100 or more	Total
Number of services	6	54	61	53	49	11	234
	Number of children currently enrolled						
Number of services	17	37	51	37	68	12	222

Services were also asked to identify the number of adults in the service teaching team. Table 3.6 presents these data and indicates that most teaching teams had between 4–6 adults (N=71) or 7–10 adults (N=76).

Table 3.6:   Number of adults in responding services' teaching teams

	Number of adults in teaching team					
	1–3 adults	4–6 adults	7–10 adults	11–19 adults	20 or more adults	Total number of responding services
Number of services	28	71	76	39	25	239

Services were asked to indicate how many members of their teaching team identified with different ethnicities (respondents were able to select more than one ethnicity for individuals). Results indicate that services have ethnically diverse teaching teams (see Table 3.7). Of the 293 services who responded to this question, 64.5% had one or more adults who identified as New Zealand European, 43.7% had one or more adults who identified as New Zealand Māori, 40.1% had staff who identified as being of Pacific Nations ethnicity, 21.5% had staff who identified as being from an Asian ethnic background, and 8.9% had staff who identified as Middle Eastern or African. Sixty-four services (21.8%) had one or more staff who identified as being from an "Other" ethnic background.

Table 3.7:   Teaching team members' ethnicity

	Number of services with staff identifying with the following ethnic backgrounds					
	NZ Māori	NZ European	Pacific peoples	Asian	Middle Eastern/ African	Other
Services with no staff	165	104	197	230	267	229
Services with 1–2 staff	89	40	57	46	25	38
Services with 3–5 staff	27	72	13	14	1	12
Services with 6–9 staff	11	38	10	0	0	1
Services with 10+ staff	1	39	7	2	0	1
Services with unidentifiable numbers of staff	0	0	9	1	0	12

Services were asked to identify whether they were located in rural, town, suburban or city central locations. Table 3.8 presents data that indicates that whilst almost half of responding services identified as being city suburban, the remaining services were relatively evenly spread across city central (14%), town (20%) and rural (17%) locations.

Table 3.8:   Locations of responding services

Location	Number	Percentage
City – central	33	14%
City – suburban	117	50%
Town	46	20%
Rural	39	17%
Total	235	100%

Services were asked which MoE-funded professional development programmes they had participated in during the previous 18 months – Programme 1: in-depth or clustered PD; Programme 2: national Leadership (with either of the two providers delivering this programme); or Programme 3: national Education and care for children under two (with either provider) – and could identify more than one programme. Just over three-quarters of the 219 services (76.2%) responding to this question had been involved in a single programme: 39.7% in programme 1, 30.1% in the national leadership programme and 6.4% in the national education and care of children under two programme. Fifty-two services had participated in combinations of two or three of the programmes as outlined in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9:   Number of services participating in different programmes

MoE-funded PD programmes service has been involved with over last 18 months	Number	Percentage
Programme 1 only: In-depth professional development to services or clusters of services in targeted areas	87	39.7%
Programme 2 only: Professional Leadership - national programme	66	30.1%
Programme 3 only: Education and care of children under two – national programme	14	6.4%
Programmes 1 and 2	34	15.5%
Programmes 1 and 3	5	2.3%
Programmes 2 and 3	7	3.2%
Programmes 1, 2 and 3	6	2.7%
Total	219	100%

Services were asked to respond to the remainder of the survey using their experiences with the programme they had undertaken most of their professional development in. This wording did not anticipate the high proportion (23.7%) of services that have engaged in more than one PD programme and so, given that it was impossible to identify which programme this group of respondents have based their responses on, our analyses of data by programme type have used the following groupings:

- Programme one respondents (N=87)
- Programme two and/or three respondents (N=87)
- Programme one plus programme two and/or three respondents (N=45)

We did not ask services to indicate who their provider was, given that this evaluation was not focused on individual providers.

Services were asked to identify the focus area(s) that their professional development programme had addressed, with more than one focus area able to be selected. The results presented in Table 3.10 show a relatively even spread of focus areas across leadership (40%), literacy (36%), social competence (35%) and transitions (32%). Fewer services had engaged in PD focused on numeracy (23%) or the education and care of children aged under two years (17%).

Table 3.10:   PD focus areas

Focus areas	Response	Percentage
Leadership	88	40%
Literacy	78	36%
Developing children's social competence	77	35%
Transitions (into and within services; from ECE to school)	70	32%
Numeracy	51	23%
Education and care of children aged under two years	38	17%
Other (please specify)	48	22%

Of interest was the high number of services (N=48; 22%) who indicated a different PD focus. Most frequently identified amongst these responses were PD focused on aspects of planning and assessment for children's learning (N=16), closely followed by PD focused on biculturalism or te reo me ngā tikanga Māori (N=15). Six services reported that their PD programme was focused on self-review. These responses are, to some extent, unsurprising given the broader emphases within the PD contracts on improving practice to improve children's learning outcomes, being responsive to children's identity, culture and language, and developing processes for on-going reflection and continuous improvement. However, whilst four other services referred to having focused on a broad range of topics that fitted within the above focus areas, three services also referred to the *Incredible Years* programme and three services referred to topics beyond the scope of the PD focus areas (such as eradication of poverty and children's speech) suggesting that they may have confused their engagement in other PD opportunities with their MoE-funded programme.

The final demographic question asked responding services to indicate how far through their PD programme they were, offering six options. Table 3.11 identifies that 60% were about to finish or had finished their programme (recently, a while ago, or had finished their first programme and started a second round), whilst 27% were in the middle of their programme and 13% had just started their programme. Analyses of data by respondents' progress through their PD programme have used three bands: just started; in the middle and at the end (encompassing respondents who were almost at the end, recently finished, finished a while ago, or had embarked on a second round of PD).

Table 3.11: Progress through PD programme

Progress through PD Programme	Number	Percentage
We have just started our programme	28	13%
We are in the middle of our programme	59	27%
We are almost at the end of our programme	44	20%
We recently finished our programme	25	11%
We finished our programme a while ago	41	19%
We finished our first programme and have started a second round of PD	22	10%
Total	219	100%

We were interested in the approaches to PD delivery used by providers to assist our understanding of services' experiences of their programmes. Services were asked to indicate which delivery methods, from a fixed list, they had experienced (see Table 3.12). The most frequently experienced delivery modes were whole-centre/service delivery, workshops and seminars, and cluster groups. Least frequently used modes of delivery were online activities such as forums or webinars. Nine services identified other modes of delivery including: one-on-one or mentoring activities (3), opportunities to work with mana whenua such as local kaumatua or visiting the local marae (2), being observed (1), having the support of interested parents (1) and the local association (1), and sharing reflective ideas (1). Three services made general comments in this section that did not specifically identify delivery modes.

Table 3.12: PD modes of delivery experienced

Modes of delivery	Yes	No	Total
Whole-centre/service delivery	131	19	150
Workshops/seminars	119	22	141
Cluster groups	118	31	149
Visits to other ECE services	61	71	132
Peer mentoring from other ECE practitioners	40	89	129
Online activities, such as forums, "webinars"	36	89	125
Other - please specify	9	13	22

Services were then asked how effective they found these delivery methods. More than 95% of the services who had experienced whole-centre/service delivery, visits to other services, peer mentoring and online activities found these approaches to be very effective or effective (see Table 3.13). Just over one-quarter (26.7%) of services found the cluster groups to be ineffective or very ineffective whilst 10.3% found workshops and seminars to be ineffective or very ineffective.

Table 3.13:   Effectiveness of delivery methods

Modes of delivery	Very effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective	Not applicable to our PD programme	Totals
Whole-centre/service delivery	74	55	1	0	10	140
Workshops/seminars	50	54	10	2	20	136
Visits to other ECE services	57	51	4	0	16	128
Peer mentoring from other ECE practitioners	26	37	1	0	48	112
Cluster groups	8	25	10	2	57	102
Online activities, such as forums, "webinars"	18	22	2	0	58	100
Other – please specify	7	3	0	0	13	23

CASE STUDIES OF PARTICIPATING SERVICES

Case studies were selected for the final phase of the evaluation project to complement the data obtained through the self-report components (provider milestone reports, interviews and online survey) and to provide independent empirical data of the impact of the professional development programmes within services. Yin (2009) argues that case study methodology has a distinctive place within evaluation research, allowing researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events whilst Newby (2010) highlights that this method enables researchers to gain a rich understanding of situations.

In this phase 16 individual case studies of participating ECE centres were undertaken. Initially, 14 case studies were selected; however, site visits to two services were constrained by circumstances outside the control of the site evaluator resulting in incomplete data collection in those services. Whilst data from these two services is included in the evaluation, two further sites were selected to ensure sufficient data had been collected in this phase.

Collectively, the 16 case studies cover the range of programmes, providers, service types, geographic regions, and focus areas offered within the programmes. We note, however, that results from individual cases are not intended to be generalised across service types or providers' programmes. Fourteen services were selected from amongst Programme One participating services, with a further service from each of the Leadership and Education and care for under-two's national programmes. The selection of case study services took into account respondents to the survey so that where service types were under-represented amongst the survey respondents we were able to increase the number of services of that type within the case study sample. Some cases were also selected from services that had chosen not to respond to the survey on the basis that they may reveal different experiences and views to those services that did respond to the survey.

The case study phase enabled more detailed, nuanced data to be collected, as the researchers undertaking each site visit were able to draw on a range of strategies for data collection and include both teacher and parent voices. Visiting each case study site allowed for the development of a stronger relationship between the researchers and the services than that possible through a survey alone, enabling clarification about the focus and intention of the evaluation and thus building trust with the participating services. Fieldworkers visiting each case study site were carefully matched to the selected services (e.g., cultural and language knowledge matching the service's philosophy; previous teaching or research experience in that type of service) to further facilitate the building of positive relationships. Site visits were

undertaken between mid-September and late-October 2012 by members of the evaluation team (Glasgow, Rameka, Shuker and Stephenson) and by two research assistants (Barker, Goodman).

A detailed case study protocol was developed and approved through the VUW ethics approval process (see Appendix C), and training provided to the site visitors. Each centre selected was invited to participate in a one-day site visit during which the following data collection activities were undertaken:

1. Direct observations of teacher practices in relation to the area focused on in the professional development programme. Observations also looked for evidence of teachers valuing children's identity, language and culture. An observation schedule was designed to ensure reliability of data collection across observers and services.

2. Content analysis of documentation and environmental artifacts (for example, wall displays, information to parents, policy statements, portfolios, physical play environment) that relate specifically to how the services were valuing children's culture, language and identity and to the specific focus area of the professional development undertaken (such as literacy).

3. Semi-structured interviews with service management and teachers in order to gain the perspectives of programme participants and the broader service community. Interviews were conducted in a flexible manner, either with groups or with individuals, in negotiation with the service community.

4. Semi-structured interviews with parents were conducted in an informal, conversational manner designed to elicit their perceptions of any changes in teacher practices, particularly those impacting on their children's learning that they had observed over the course of, or subsequent to the completion of the professional development programme.

We were concerned that many individual services could be easily identifiable, either to their PD provider or to a more general audience, through a combination of their geographical location, service type, PD focus and level of progress. Thus, in order to ensure the anonymity of those participating, the data from the 16 case studies are reported collectively, rather than as individual services.

Overview of case study services

Each of the nine providers included in this evaluation project are represented through the selection of case study services. Of the 16 services, two were located in the South Island, four in the lower North Island, four in the Waikato/Bay of Plenty region, and six in the greater Auckland region. Six services were education and care (including several licensed for children aged under-two years), whilst there were two each of kindergarten, Māori Immersion, Pasifika language nests, playcentre and home-based care. Ten services were located in major cities, four in smaller cities, and two in rural towns.

Telephone interviews with organisations beyond ECE services

In order to address one of the evaluation questions, How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?, telephone interviews were planned with stakeholders located in the broader communities within which each case study centre was located. Data collection in the first case study services indicated that many teachers and educators were not aware of who their PD provider was interacting with in the broader community, and thus were unable to provide details of possible agencies or organisations that we could contact for a telephone interview. Instead, a sample of organisations and individuals was drawn from the provider interview data and contacted in order to set up a brief telephone interview (see Appendix C: Case study protocol – final section: Telephone interviews with organisations beyond the service).

Twelve telephone interviews were undertaken, each of approximately 10–15 minutes duration. Notes of responses were taken by the interviewer and later written up. Interviews were with MoE regional offices, seven umbrella organisations, one special education representative, and one community organisation.

Data analysis

Within the survey component of the evaluation, quantitative data analysis included descriptive statistics including frequencies, means and cross-tabulations. Qualitative data gathered via the document analyses, provider interviews, responses to open-ended questions in the survey, case studies, and external organisation interviews were coded and analysed in accordance with grounded theory approaches (Charmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). NVivo software was used in order to sort, manage and analyse the qualitative data.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval for this evaluation was gained from the Victoria University of Wellington Human Ethics Committee (Number 19426) on 9 August 2012.

Chapter 4: Results: Changing teacher practices to improve children's learning outcomes

This chapter addresses the first overarching evaluation question: *In what ways has PD changed teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children?* It presents data from the document analyses, provider interviews, online survey, and case studies to answer the following five evaluation questions:

- *How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?*

- *How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?*

- *How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?*

- *How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?*

- *How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?*

Evaluation question 1: How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

PD provider reports contain both quantitative and qualitative evidence indicating the effectiveness of their programmes in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes. Data relating specifically to teacher practices in the focus area are discussed in Question 2; here the focus is on the more general evidence of how providers supported teachers to make shifts in their practices.

There is considerable variation in the range and detail of qualitative examples in PD provider reports reflecting:

- the scope of the provider's programme
- the range and number of services engaged with
- the level of detail the provider chose to include
- the provider's process for gathering evaluative evidence.

In all reports there are broad statements describing the kind of generic shifts achieved by services, plus detailed examples of changes from individual services. Four associated themes were identified in discussions of the impact of PD on teacher practices, and these are outlined below, along with the strategies identified as being particularly effective in improving teacher practices.

Evidence of shifts in teacher practices

The following statements convey the scope and range of PD providers' comments. While there are success stories, there are also descriptions of less obvious but still significant shifts in teacher attitudes and practices and of services where shifts have been slower to occur. The majority of providers include descriptions of shifts at both ends of the spectrum, and in doing so convey a sense of authenticity, a feeling that these are realistic evaluations of what it has been possible to achieve so far. The following comments, drawn from across the PD provider reports, indicate the range of examples offered:

- Innovations in practice are being recorded at most centres, ranging from a simple shift in the types of indoor and outdoor material available to children at a centre to the way parent voices are being included in the learning stories.

- From viewing the video of interactions between adults and children, and reflections drawing on the video and rubrics, the visiting teacher's practice [in a home-based setting] changed within days, such as maximising times they are meeting with parents to access families' funds of knowledge, and supporting educators in following through on this information.

- Teachers demonstrate stronger distributed leadership and function more as a team than separate individuals.

- Teachers report they are no longer asking 'is this right? ' 'Is this ok?'; now they are trying new ideas and bringing them to the meeting to discuss.

- Improved and strengthened narrative assessment. Documentations reflect the child as a 'learner' and connections over time are becoming evident. Teachers have become more confident and more reflective writers of learning stories.

- Shifts have been slow in coming but hugely important to the improvement of care and education for the children. These changes noted:
  - Teachers working in partnership with children
  - Encouragement of teina-tuakana relationships amongst children
  - Children being given the opportunity to solve problems themselves
  - Recognising learning and recording more details in documentation
  - Looking at the children's learning in a different light.

Four themes in PD providers' discussions of the impact of PD programmes on teacher practices

Four interrelated themes emerge in providers' discussions of the impact of their programmes on teacher practices. First, there are repeated references to the need to take time to build relationships with teachers and services before engaging in PD. It was recognised as "essential to the engagement of teachers and to ensuring PD programmes responded in purposeful and meaningful ways to each teaching team". This was seen as particularly important when working in the targeted communities.

Secondly, several PD provider reports stress changes take time when behaviours and ways of working are entrenched. One provider, describing centres' responses to critical ERO reports, captures the lack of professional knowledge, and the sense of helplessness and inadequacy teachers may experience, when challenged to change:

> Participants have no idea how to make the changes required or know what to do and have the resources and have chosen to do nothing. There appears to be a lack of understanding of the complexity of what to do and the consequences of the response taken.

Provider recognition that sustained change may take time is demonstrated by their continuing commitment to services completing the first phase of PD. As this report will indicate, evidence suggests that the provision of on-going support, whether from the PD provider directly, or through a cluster or community of practice, will be a significant contributor to sustained change. One provider stated: "It is clear that in the very challenging settings, the on-going role of the Project Facilitator is vital".

Thirdly, there is recognition in several reports that even small changes may represent significant shifts in practice; for example, at times providers recognised that while changes were "slow in coming" they were also "hugely important".

Finally, there is awareness in provider reports that changes in teacher practice are not of themselves sufficient. Alongside the many examples of innovations in practice, there are examples where the PD focus has been on deepening teachers' understanding of their own role in supporting children's learning. For example:

> Teachers are familiar with KTOTP but confess they have limited knowledge and understanding. Facilitators are supporting teachers to develop their theoretical knowledge to recognise and articulate the depth of children's learning, along with skill in tracking the complexity and continuity of children's dispositions and working theories.

Facilitators report teachers adopting 'best practices' from other centres but without developing their own theoretical understandings as they integrate other approaches into their setting. One provider writes: "Teachers tend to judge the success of their PD on the changes they make to their practice and not on changes in outcomes for children. That latter takes time as well as an attitude shift about the purpose of PD which not all centres have achieved."

Facilitator strategies identified as effective in supporting shifts in teacher practices

Providers acknowledged the role of the facilitator as critical – and in some reports there were references to the ways in which PD providers supported the facilitators in their teams. Facilitator strategies identified as effective in shifting teacher practices included:

- Getting 'buy in' from the whole team, including the support of leadership/management. Where services selected their own goals there was more likely to be 'buy in'. Where there was flexibility in the PD provider's programme, there was more opportunity to be responsive to a service's self-selected goals.

- Incorporating self-review encouraged reflection on practice.

- Using Appreciative Inquiry helped make the PD responsive to a service's needs and interests.

- Undertaking a philosophy review. A provider reported this led to teachers "communicating more effectively with each other and providing consistency within the centre's programme".

- Video used as a tool:
    - By facilitators – Video of practices had a powerful impact on teachers
    - By teachers – A preferred tool in data-gathering because it provided rich and rapid feedback.

- Visits to centres with strengths in the chosen focus area. One provider commented that visiting highly effective centres was a significant change agent.

- Bringing in 'experts' to provide seminars and workshops.

- Access to research information

- Online support. While there is mixed feedback from those providers who introduced online platforms there is evidence that with considerable in-put to services, and continuing commitment to develop and refine the platform, there is potential to offer significant support online.

- Working with other documents to strengthen understanding: *Te Whāriki, Kei tua o te pae, Ngā arohaehae whai hua*, the new MoE maths resource.

- Cluster meetings: Some providers describe these as empowering, with teachers being motivated through sharing their journeys, and collaborating in collectively exploring focus areas

- Final presentations: Some providers found these provided a goal and/or motive for teams to work towards; however there are also reports of centres avoiding doing presentations.

In the course of the interviews PD providers were asked **"**Looking now at improving teacher practices in order to improve children's learning outcomes:

- In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract improved teacher practices in order to improve children's learning outcomes?

- What challenges and successes have you faced in getting teachers to focus on the impact that their practice has on children's learning?"

This discussion is based on their responses to the first part of that question; their answers to the second part are covered in Evaluation Question 3 later in this chapter. Examples of improved teacher practices in the focus areas are included in discussion of Evaluation Question 2 below. This section includes providers' descriptions of:

- Facilitator strategies that proved effective in improving teacher practices
- The challenge of changing teacher attitudes
- Positive examples of shifts in teacher practices.

Strategies used to improve teacher practices and consequently learning outcomes for children

Most providers described in some detail the approaches they were using to focus teachers on improving their practices in order to improve learning outcomes for children although two talked more in terms of successes achieved. In discussion of the strategies and approaches used three key themes emerged – establishing culture of reflective practice, the impact of a range of facilitator strategies, and the need to revisit assessment and evaluation processes.

Establishing a culture of reflective practice

Establishing a culture of reflective practice was recognised by most as the starting place:

> Getting them to just start reflecting, like some teams they just have never reflected and maybe they've done a little bit in their training but sometimes they've not even done that so just start with getting them to do things like team reflections and just to give them that confidence about taking that on.

PD meetings were seen to provide teachers with what for some was a rare opportunity to talk about teaching and learning. "Meeting more regularly… Communicating with each other on a different level than they would have before. Strategically questioning and reflecting with each other and evaluating what's happening". Having a shared vision was seen to be motivating; "shared goals and shared visions … that's really empowering them to support each other from within and actually get where they want to go because they drive each other".

Several providers spoke in particular about the requirement to use self-review, and its value in engaging teachers in reflection, especially when the whole team was involved. Similarly, the appreciative inquiry model was recognised as a "powerful process" that allowed centres "to start from a position of strength and confidence" but was also an opportunity for centres to "begin to grow critical" (For further discussion of the PD providers' effectiveness in supporting teachers' reflectiveness see Evaluation Question 4 later in this chapter).

Effective facilitator strategies

The following facilitator strategies and approaches were identified as being effective in supporting teachers to focus on their practices, and on how those impact on children's learning outcomes. Their discussions provided elaboration and detail to the examples of facilitator strategies noted in the milestone reports:

- Facilitator support in recognising learning: "I think the whole scaffolding and modelling that the facilitators have done is giving them the vocabulary and confidence"; "Teachers can

notice changes for children, so they notice children doing things differently or saying things, so they'll talk about that but it's with the facilitator's support alongside that they can see that the change in practice or whatever they've done differently, the ways that that may have influenced that outcome."

- Facilitators modelling interactions with children.

- Observations on session: "That's been the material that you have used …in the meetings to actually unpack what that meant…. What would happen if you changed this part of it? Or what would happen if you changed this part of it?"

- Video as a tool for encouraging reflection: "Every time I've done that kind of thing, people have been amazed at how powerful it is because of the chance to reflect".

- A focus on what children are doing: "[Facilitator name] had some amazing videos and conversations … with what children were doing in centres". They were used as a "conversation tool to say how can we enrich this? How can we bring in different cultures into this conversation? How can we bring in parents into this conversation? So it gives us that very localised context to them."

- Reflective journals: "We encourage the teachers to keep reflective journals. In some cases that's been successful. In others, not so successful".

- The rubrics: Providing teachers with a goal to aim for, they help "focus teachers on the outcomes for children".

- Sessions to supplement teacher knowledge: "They don't know what learning outcomes might be, their domain knowledge, their pedagogical content knowledge is fairly light and we did a bit of front loading of that at the beginning of the contract"

- Documentation exchange between facilitator and service – feedback on visits, feed forward in preparation for the next visit.

- Providing resources:
  - One provider identified "what teachers were doing is defaulting to talking about their teaching in same ways too, like they weren't really broadening their repertoire of teaching practices." And so they built on a resource initiated by a teacher, extended it, and shared with other teachers. "So how they use it is when they're doing their documentation they look through and think now what strategy did I use to support that child's learning".
  - Readings – "It's not about just giving them the literature but actually asking them in a workshop situation to pull out three key messages that they could action in their services";
  - Use of online resources by some providers including providing YouTube video and notes provided prior to meetings: "Hugely helped by the technology – drop-boxes and [provider website]".

Revisiting assessment and evaluation processes

Assessment and evaluation processes were a strong focus—several providers reported having to revisit these with teachers. One commented that even when teachers start:

> to change their practices and their thinking, beliefs and some of their assumptions about the learner…the systems in the service to track and monitor them effectively and to give them the kind of documentation and evidence, or information to then analyse and claim as evidence [weren't available]. They weren't writing stories in a way that would capture it, they weren't observing in a way that would make it visible and so we realized there was never going to be the evidence of the shift in teacher thinking so we have had to go back in and do the assessment stuff.

Strategies providers described using included:

- Using the *Kei tua o te pae* assessment cycle

- Improving learning story documentation: "Encouraging them to write reflectively inside their learning stories so you see the deep thinking that's taking place."

- Giving teachers individual feedback on their learning stories.

- Using exemplar learning stories: Providing a "strong model of good learning stories" which leads teachers to want to get to that point where they too can write "great credit based stories. So then that shifts their practice, because not only do they want to write well, but they have to create the environment where that happens".

- Encouraging teachers to share learning stories and to comment on each other's.

- Teachers writing learning stories for each other: "if they see a teacher having a fabulous moment with a child or not a moment but a series … they can say about how stunning that relationship is, whereas the teacher can't say that."

- Using learning stories in the self-review process: "looking at what valued learning can look like, how they can extend it, deepen it, how they can provide more provocations to support children to go further. Those tell you all about your practice."

- Using a variety of observation techniques: "Teachers are not using a whole repertoire of observational tools so we're out there promoting alternatives, a more expansive observation platform".

Teacher attitudes a barrier to change

The difficulty of changing teacher attitudes was raised in a number of ways by providers. One provider said:

> … the deeply entrenched beliefs and values. I think one of the biggest challenges of this PD was that it actually asks you to tackle core values that you may not even articulate for yourself. And so it is asking you to bring it to the surface and that can be challenging at many levels.

Another described the challenge of working with "individuals or services thinking that their practice is incredible". A flow-on effect of the increased pressure on individual teachers to change attitudes and practices was described by one provider:

> I think some of the teachers that are in our communities are there because they think they don't have to work quite so hard and there's been an awakening that they do have to work hard because these children and families deserve teachers with high energy levels who know what they're doing.

She linked this to a recent spate of resignations and staff turnover, saying "that won't all be because of the project but some of it is, it's showing up people's incompetence because we're asking them to do things that their leaders should have been asking [but] haven't and they are having that awakening".

Positive examples of change

No provider referred to shifts in the rubrics in describing examples of success; instead they offered qualitative examples, both generic and specific. The following provide an indication of the variety of examples offered (see Evaluation Question 2 later in this chapter for further examples related to the focus areas):

> All the staff are Pākehā. The whole lot of them. Their journey … has been absolutely amazing. They all learn te reo, they are all totally focussed. They all learnt about whakapapa, everything. And the majority of their children, their tamariki are non-Māori too but they have embraced this kaupapa.

Lots of things going home so that things that are happening at home happen back in the centre as well, it's about learning and it's also about listening, I can see a big change with how they engage with children's investigations and explorations in their learning and also how we respond and, of course, they were all issues for ERO to start with.

ONLINE SURVEY

Responses (N=170) to the online survey question "Please give an example of how your practices in your focus area(s) have changed as a result of your engagement in your PD programme" were overwhelmingly positive, and included qualitative examples of improvements in a wide range of teaching practices. Evidence of changed practices in the focus areas is discussed in Question 2, and the detailed quantitative evidence of teachers' increasing focus on learning outcomes for children is covered in Question 3. Here the discussion focuses on more general improvements in teaching practices as a result of the PD programmes.

A few of the 170 responses described wide-ranging global changes; for example: "they have changed immensely in all areas" and

> [The PD] has allowed us to progress in all areas of curriculum, management, whānau engagement. We have changed our entire environment, our programming is now working with real understanding of the elements involved and the overall confidence of our entire teaching team has been extraordinary.

Others gave more specific examples of changed practice; "stop and think before getting involved" and "teachers are now more reflective of their own teaching and are engaging in dialogue". Other examples include:

> Teachers are more aware of a variety of opportunities to offer children in the essential learning areas. Teachers are reflective and use what they have learnt to identify children's strengths and challenges. As result they have used a range of resources to extend children's learning that are challenging and fun for all learners.

Some responses referred to the PD contributing to an improved culture within the service. There were references to a service being "better to work in for the staff, freer, and more cohesive and this in turn benefits the children and their learning" and to a team "working together cohesively, rather than individually". Others referred to changes in leadership within the team; for example, "Much more leadership within the team with several staff members taking leadership roles in different parts of the programme". Two services just beginning PD wrote of the "excitement" building in the team, and of teachers being "more motivated to make changes".

Sixteen responses related to changes in assessment processes and practices (e.g., writing more in-depth learning stories, changing the planning process to focus on children's interests). While these came from services enrolled across all the PD programmes, seven of the 16 were from services enrolled in Programme 1 plus either Programme 2 or Programme 3. Only three were from services enrolled only in Programme 1. Comments included:

> There has been a huge increase in the quality of our learning stories by all staff. We are now all aware that there are many ways to write and present learning stories – everyone has their own style but they all show the learning progress.

(For further discussion of these responses see the section on Pedagogical Leadership, Evaluation Question 2 later in this chapter).

Eleven comments focused on reflection and/or team discussions about teaching practices, and came from services across all programmes. Examples included: "Documentation for the project has made us aware of what we are doing and we have now begun to regularly reflect on our practice" and "Our teaching discussions are far more beneficial and focus on teaching and learning more and more as we go along".

There were a smaller number of references to making better use of resources and to improving the environment. For example, "More aware of the resources we have and ideas on how to use them"; "The environment has been looked at and changes made to help the children become engaged in their play.

A number of responses indicated changes were underway, or still being contemplated, but almost all of these came from services just beginning their PD. For example:

> We have only just started but already seeing teachers foreground language, culture and identity when exploring/reflecting on a range of teaching and learning practices. When we initially completed the rubrics this was hardly visible.

A few respondents, apart from those just embarking on their PD, were tentative about the impact of PD:

> For the period of time we were working in these areas teachers did focus and discuss teaching and learning aspects in detail and we did improve the way we documented this information.

> We feel the knowledge we have gained and implemented … has been gained more through new experienced Registered Teachers joining our team… than the Professional Development we have been receiving.

Four of the 170 responses, from across different programmes, were more negative. For example, one wrote of being "utterly frustrated" and another commented "We gained no more knowledge from the PD that we were not already practising. Our results did not change, we were already very effective."

Despite the wide range of positive examples, and the high levels of satisfaction with the effectiveness of the programme in making a difference for children in the service, only a minority of the descriptions of changed teacher practices included a reference to the impact of these on children's learning outcomes. However, many responses focused on changes in teacher practices and teacher reflectiveness that would impact positively on children's learning. For example:

> We are now more effective at interacting with children and extending their learning through different mediums of play.

> We are now allowing Tamariki to take full advantage of what they want to learn. We are focusing on what Tamariki want to put into their profiles such as special art work.

(See Evaluation Question 3 later in this chapter, for a full discussion of how successful the PD programmes have been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact of their practices on learning outcomes for children.)

CASE STUDIES

Reviewing the 16 case studies gives further evidence of positive changes in teacher practices as a result of the PD. This discussion reviews the identified evidence, and also explores the broader question of *how* the PD has been successful in improving practices. It covers:

- In what ways do educators – and the site evaluators who visited the case study sites – perceive the PD programme has enhanced teachers' practices in order to improve learning outcomes for children

- What are identified as barriers in improving teacher practices?

In the following discussion three of the 16 case studies services appear only briefly; they are the services where less evidence of significant shifts in practice were seen. All other case studies are represented by at least one example of significant change and, while not all were 'high fliers', it was nevertheless easy to find positive examples from the site evaluators' reports.

The three sites where the fewest shifts appear to have occurred include one where the PD exacerbated tensions within a team and was discontinued, and two where the PD consisted of four workshops (plus four on-session visits for one service) with little or no service-facilitator communication between.

How have teacher practices been enhanced?

A range of themes emerge from the many comments made by teachers, parents, managers, owners – and site evaluators – about the impact of the PD on teacher practices. Some themes relate to aspects less immediately relevant to enhanced outcomes for children – teacher enthusiasm, confidence, team-building – but in some contexts these may provide the much-needed foundation for further development. Other themes – growth in teacher reflection, shifts in practice, improved learning documentation – are indicative of significant change occurring. The emerging themes have been clustered into:

- The personal and interpersonal dimension – confidence, enthusiasm, personal awareness, team building

- Shifting practices – new knowledge, increasing reflection and discussion, changing environments, shifts in practices and teacher intentionality

- Shifts in planning and assessment processes

This third theme is considered apart from other changes in teacher practices because it was so prominent in the case study reports. The first theme is summarised, the other two are discussed in detail.

The personal and interpersonal dimension

- Confidence: "Sometimes fear of looking inside oneself stops you from coming forward or challenging yourself. The work was a challenge for some." Examples showed involvement in the PD programme often gave individuals confidence – in themselves, as new team members, in their leadership qualities, and/or in their role as educators. A home-based educator said the most important thing she has gained is "a real sense of confidence" in her teaching practices.

- Team building: "Getting everyone on the same waka". In many sites the PD journey drew the team together – "working together with a shared passion and enthusiasm".

Shifting practices – shifts in knowledge, reflection and discussion, in environments, and in practices

New knowledge

Many spoke of new knowledge acquired through PD. There were reports of gaining helpful practical ideas from workshops: "The most valuable PD was a 2-hour workshop on numeracy." Teachers described:

- The PD workshops in the cluster groups as being "the most helpful in igniting stale knowledge amongst … the team and sharing new voices, opinions and ideas with each other". It was described as "a rut buster".

- Now understanding and using the repertoire of literacy practices in book 17 of *Kei tua a te pae*

- Recognising "other parts of numeracy for children such as geometry, is actually happening … and being able to recognise opportunities for numeracy learning opportunities"

- Their "great learning curve" in enhancing their digital learning: "So we are blogging and drop boxing stuff and all that sort of thing"

- Increased ability and confidence to use te reo Māori.

Increasing reflection and discussion

Alongside the frequent references to reflecting, professional conversations and/or keeping reflective journals, there were more detailed accounts of the kind of shifts occurring in teacher reflectiveness. In some cases this was associated with a focus on self-review. (The impact of the PD programmes on enhancing teacher reflectiveness is discussed in detail in Evaluation Questions 4 and 5 later in this chapter.)

Changing environments

In two settings, the most significant shifts were changes to the environment – and both were services where the PD was assessed to have had little impact. In a mixed-age service the focus on catering for under twos had resulted in changes in the provision for the youngest children. Indoor and outdoor areas had been established within the wider environment specifically for the younger children, and resources such as a treasure basket had been provided. (The other key changes they identified were learning about schema and a greater awareness of infants as potential learners.) In the service least satisfied with their PD programme the only positive changes reported were:

> They have become more aware of the physical aspects of their environment and their practice. They have made more free movement for their babies, made the environment more inviting, adapted the placement of the learning stories as well as improving the writing process.… It is much more calm in their environment and this has helped teachers to try new things and feel more confident.

For almost every other setting there were positive descriptions of environments. For example:

> The way the activities are laid out are all based on at least two people playing or engaging together, even the two computers provided have space for two children to work together. This subtlety shows the importance of children working together and sends messages that they feel children are capable to do so.

> The effort which has gone into the selection of the resources is very high – educators have thought hard about what activities they are going to do with the children. In all the settings, the literacy resources are significantly evident. … One particular educator created a large cubby house out of old boxes and painted it with drawings all over the outside and letters.

There was a single less positive comment about one aspect of a service's environment:

> Something that struck me when entering the space is that all the documentation and imagery on the walls is very, very high up. Nothing is at the children's level, everything would require being on a chair or being lifted to see. Whilst this is great for the parents it does discourage children from feeling part of their environment and also means that they struggle to revisit different activities.

Shifts in practices and teacher intentionality

Alongside general references to enhanced practices – "they made a strong development in their own teaching practices" – there were a variety of more detailed descriptions of how practices had changed. One teacher described identifying, through observations, that it was adult behaviours – interrupting a child's play – that were causing his challenging behaviours. Once that was understood and resolved, the situation greatly improved. A manager noticed teachers were "now able to justify their practices with the children and take what they are doing further than just in the moment". An educator with a focus on literacy has learnt to take "a more child-focused view" when reading to children. Recently she has been focusing on "counting, noticing words, matching and rhyming and the children have picked up on these skills very competently in their reading and drawing activities". In a service where the teachers were focusing on social competence, the site evaluator wrote:

> The staff place their learning from this PD as highly valuable, as it has opened their eyes to the importance of looking at their current teaching practices and evaluating ways in which they could be changed for the better of the children and themselves. The most prevalent

aspect they have gained from the PD experience is in looking at children's behaviour differently, rather than seeing it in a negative light they are able to view it in a way that questions what they can be doing to help and support that child to adapt that behaviour.

A teacher in a Pasifika service said:

> The other thing is the programme planning, because before we usually look at how we direct the children… but now we just let them do their own child choices, and how can we enhance the children's learning, how can we enhance and further extend the children's learning. So those are the good practice that we got from …the PD.

Not all reports were entirely positive. Of one setting it was noted "many of the planned activities aim at surface level outcomes, touching on aspects that could easily be deepened and widened. For these reasons I do not feel major improvements in learning outcomes for children are evident."

Some examples highlighted teachers' growing intentionality and their increased awareness of the impact of shifts in practices on outcomes for children's learning. In one context the PD programme was said to have helped:

> To empower the educators to raise the bar on their practices with children and see what things can be done …. The most positive aspect of this PD is how confident the educators have become in their own teaching, and how it has cemented what they are doing as valuable and important.

One of these educators reported:

> She now feels more positive and assured that what she is doing with the children is indeed helping their learning and development. The educator feels confident in what she puts out for activities and what she does with the children, leading her to enjoy so much more what is happening. As well as this she is pleased with the changes that have been made and is consistently building on these further.

The site evaluator wrote of another context:

> On the day of the visit I saw examples of the strategies they had discussed in the interview in action. The changes they have made to their professional discussion practices and the knowledge they have gained about their use of strategies to promote children's learning in the focus areas appear to me to mean they are more focused about what they are wanting to achieve, how and why. This would also seem to me likely to cement the changes they have made firmly into their repertoire of teaching and learning strategies….

The site evaluators' assessments of some case study sites attest to the fact that in some settings a broad focus on children's learning outcomes may still be emerging. Written comments included:

> Teachers are very focussed on using [a Pasifika] language and practices with their children. They appear to have a very strong focus on the impact of this practice on the language and cultural development of the children. Although they appear less focused at some levels, I observe their intentions being implemented in their practices.

Shifts in planning and documentation of children's learning

The third cluster of themes relates to teachers' shifts in planning and documenting children's learning; these were a significant feature of the case study reports.

Planning

There were relatively few references to planning in comparison to documenting children's learning. The manager of one service reported:

> Whilst the teachers feel they have a long way to go with their programming and planning, they have made significant inroads into the purpose of their activities with the children and

are more aware of the set up and activity layout of different activities. As a whole their intentionality of their planning is more inclusive and challenging for children as they work harmoniously together to support one another.

She identified that:

> The unstructured planning methods they had previously used as a team were ineffective as those who were unqualified found them too difficult to understand and therefore were not engaging in any formal or documented planning. By adapting the new planning methods to a more structured system to suit the various needs of the staff, the teachers were more confident in engaging in planning practices to further learning experiences for children.

A teacher in another context commented: "It has all helped. I would say that the PD has had a huge impact on us as teachers, as well [as] more ideas and knowledge on how to create programmes with the infants. It can't be on the child's interests as infants learn as they explore and their interests change every day and I need to change things and put new things in place every day. …. The PD really helps."

Documenting children's learning

Documentation of children's learning was recognised as a key component within the toolbox of teacher practices that have an impact on children's learning. There were multiple references to teachers' documentation of learning - and many alluded to teachers writing stories of increasing depth and complexity as a result of the PD. For some teachers, learning stories was a new concept:

> The documentation. Yeah, I think that has been a challenge for us the teachers, the documentation. I know it's hard because that's not our Islanders way but it's really good for me to encourage myself, especially I'm talking about myself as a supervisor …. So that's where I can see we have moved up in our documentation, it is all there… I am so very proud that … I've been introduced to Learning Stories.

In another setting, a teacher's journal recorded stages on her journey to becoming an adept writer of learning stories. She had been deeply impressed when she heard how a teacher from another service had written about a toddler making animal noises. She wrote: "the depth this teacher had gone into in her story was amazing. Told the story of the child's actions, then analysed it deeply, looking at its literacy meaning and referring to current literature to give examples of the learning taking place". She wrote her own learning story of a 13 month old communicating through crying and baby language, and noted she felt "like she had got it – the penny had dropped". In a later entry, she described receiving feedback on a story she sent to the facilitator and her excitement as she realized her stories were gaining "more depth".

Site evaluators' reports recognised shifts had occurred as a result of the PD across the majority of the case study sites. Representative comments from two sites are:

> The learning stories written by the teachers show a significant increase in their knowledge and understanding of supporting children. Whilst always good stories, there is a significant increase in the complexity of stories from after the PD was completed. Not only this, but the stories became more involved with more stories about children working with others, rather than alone. Alongside this they looked more at co-operation, sharing, turn taking, and dealing with dramatic play situations showing the value that teachers are now putting on children's social competency skills particularly in sharing that with parents. As well as this there is a much more prevalent look into reflection as well as more input of the child's voice and parents' ideas.

> The stories are much longer and are more in-depth than they were, highlighting areas of interest, learning and future plans for support. They have also placed group stories in there, as well as including bi-cultural celebrations and other occasions for parents to follow. These were aspects that were not part of the books before the PD began. Any of the older stories that were particularly thin in information have been re-written and replaced for children and families. However the stories from the previous years lack the passion, enthusiasm, interest,

and depth that the stories now convey. Whilst they are still working on improving them it is clear that teachers now understand the reason for the stories and the benefit of extending and supporting children's learning through them.

There were two sites where circumstances meant the site evaluator was not able to view any documentation of children's learning, and two sites where progress was less evident. In one of those settings, the displayed learning stories and the children's portfolios indicated not all members of the team felt confident in writing learning stories, and this was readily acknowledged. There was little or no evidence that the focus of the PD - infants and toddlers - was reflected in the writing of recent learning stories. In the other setting, documentation and learning stories had been identified as areas needing improvement in their most recent ERO visit (2012). The site evaluator commented few stories had been written during the year and there had been no change in their writing over the duration of the PD. The Centre Manager identified this as an area they want to work on; possibly as their PD next year.

Identified barriers to improving teacher practices

The discussion here identifies issues that arose for individuals and/or teams as distinct from those barriers associated with the PD programme and delivery (see discussion in Question 9). Challenges teachers, managers and/or site evaluators noted were:

- Teachers not participating in PD: Teachers who considered participating in unpaid PD in their own time was not part of their teaching role; teachers who had other out-of-centre responsibilities that conflicted with attending PD sessions.

- Teachers engaging in the PD, but not yet taking the step of reflecting on the impact of their practice. A site evaluator wrote: "They understand that engaging in PD is useful but are less able to transfer into their own teaching practices. This is interesting as there is so much evidence in the environment of how they have implemented many learning experiences around the focus area of numeracy and literacy".

- The challenge of sharing the new knowledge with the rest of the team and/or with new members. Only a few people attended a schema workshop and, although they had tried to disseminate the information, others were unaware of the concept.

- Services wanting to achieve too much. One team had a very successful first year of PD working with a single focus, but floundered in their next year when they attempted to achieve a range of disconnected goals.

- Shifting teacher attitudes. One team leader, working with educators many of whom were educated overseas, identified the challenge for her was ensuring the programme stayed firmly rooted in *Te Whāriki*, rather than taking a formal rote-learning approach to literacy.

- Team issues. In two settings it was noted that relationship stresses within the team interfered with the implementation of the PD programme, and in one the PD programme was reported to have exacerbated the tensions to such an extent that the programme was halted.

- The difficulty of keeping up the momentum once the PD journey ended: "They all said that standards have dropped since they are not reflecting as often and as intensely as they did last year".

Evaluation Question 2: How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Data from PD provider reports are drawn on to give:

- The range of focus areas and the shifts in rubric ratings across those focus areas
- Examples of shifts in practices in each of the focus areas; where barriers and /or enablers have been identified these are listed.

The range of focus areas and shifts in rubric ratings

Table 4.1 uses quantitative rubric reporting data from tables in providers' Milestone 6 reports to show the spread of services engaging in MoE focus areas. The high rates of engagement in Rubric A (Parents and whānau engagement in children's learning), B (Effective teaching practices for Māori children) and C (Effective educational leadership: culturally responsive learning contexts and systems) reflects the fact that the MoE stipulated every service should have an assessment for these three areas. It appears no service has engaged with Rubric B1 (Culturally responsive and effective teaching practices for Pasifika children), although we note that this rubric was only included in the second iteration of the rubrics document. Of the remaining focus areas, Rubrics F (Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers) and Rubrics G and H (Effective focus on transitions to school, and to transitions into and within the service) are the least frequently selected areas. This partly reflects the range of focus areas providers have chosen to offer in the first part of the contract period.

Table 4.1: **Range of focus areas by provider (based on tables of rubric ratings in the eight Milestone 6 reports that include this information)***

Rubric	A	B	B1	C	D	E	F	G**	H**	I
Provider 1	92	92		92	40	14	1	28	4	14
Provider 2	60	60		60	31	-	2	3		27
Provider 3	48	48		16	9	9	5	7		11
Provider 4	17	17		17	17					
Provider 5	57	20		57	20	24	8	7		12
Provider 6	13	13		18	1	1	1	1		4
Provider 7	13	13		13	4		5			
Provider 8	32	32		12	6	6	18		8	8
Totals	332	295		285	128	54	40	58		76

* Where there is conflicting information in the provider report re the number of centres with a focus on a particular rubric, other data available on focus areas has been used for clarifying the meaning.

** Where it is not clear from the provider rubric tables which focus on transitions was taken, these figures are combined.

Table 4.2 uses the same data to show overall shifts in practices across these areas.

Table 4.2: **Shift in rubric rating on completion of PD (Based on rubric ratings tables in the seven Milestone 6 reports where this information was accessible)***

Rubric Rating	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	Total	No. with improved rating	% with improved rating
A		6	68	140	56	8		278	204	73.4%
B		3	97	113	19	5		237	137	57.8%
B1										
C	1	4	67	111	54	27		264	192	72.7%
D		1	17	52	26	9	1	106	88	83%
E			7	19	18	8		52	45	86.5%
D/E**			1	2				3	2	66.7%
F			2	11	11	6		30	28	93.3%
G ***		1	8	24	14	2		49	40	81.6%
H			1	2	1			4	3	75%
I			18	39	17			74	56	75.7%
Totals	1	15	286	513	216	65	1	1097		

- One provider did not include information on rubric shifts. The information from another provider was not able to be interpreted with certainty, and so was not included. A third provider referred to negative shifts but recorded only positive shifts; the balance have been indicated as 0 shift.

** One provider gave services a combined rubric shift for the combined focus areas of maths and literacy.

Total number of services appear to differ from Table 1 because some services are given rubric ratings in more than one focus area (e.g. in both literacy and numeracy)

*** Where the focus of Transitions was not indicated, they were combined into the transition to school strand.

While these tables provide an overview of the positive shifts occurring, they should not be considered more than indicative for the following reasons:

1. They do not include rubric ratings from all providers.

2. They are based on only first-phase rubric reporting. A key message repeated through milestone reports is that change takes time.

3. The pre- and post-PD rubric rating process was conducted in very different ways by providers and/or services.

4. There is considerable variety in services' reported shifts in rubric ratings, both within providers and between providers. All providers give evidence of improved practices and all but two give quantitative evidence of shifts in rubric ratings. However, only two providers included negative shifts in ratings, while for others all rankings were either zero or positive (There is further discussion of how providers and services used the rubrics in Chapter 8, Evaluation Questions 14 and 15).

5. Nil or negative rating should not be assumed to mean lack of progress. It may reflect greater engagement with and/or understanding of descriptors on the rubric scale at the post-PD rating, and/or it may reflect movement within a rating scale.

6. Some providers reported difficulty in obtaining final ratings from services.

The tables are useful in indicating the spread of focus areas across PD providers, and the relative rates of improvement within the focus areas. The relatively low rate of improvement for Rubric B (Effective teaching practices for Māori children) should be monitored in future milestone reporting.

PD programme focus areas

There is considerable variation in the range and detail of qualitative data on teacher practices in the focus areas across the PD providers' reports. This variation reflects such factors as:

- The range of MoE focus areas offered by PD providers varied reflecting the size of their organisation, the range and number of services they engaged with, and their overall 3-year programme. Some services were offered the full range in the first phase of the programme. Others had a smaller range on offer.

- Providers chose to present information in different ways. For example:
  - In some reports literacy and numeracy are combined
  - Some reports give examples for both a focus on Outcomes for Māori children and for Culture, language and identity; in others, there are no qualitative examples for either of these.

- MoE defined valuing identity language and culture as central to the programme. Further, the guidelines for the rubrics stated:

  … to ensure that identity, language and culture underpins all the programmes it is expected that every service has an assessment for:

  - Parent, whānau and iwi engagement in children's learning [Rubric A];
  - Effective teaching for Māori learners [Rubric B]; and
  - Effective educational leadership; culturally responsive learning contexts and pedagogies [Rubric C] if appropriate
  - Plus any other agreed topic." (Rubrics, December 2011, p.4)

However, providers differed in how the three stipulated areas were promoted within their PD programme, and services differed in how receptive they were to PD in these areas.

Many examples through the reports show the impact on teacher practices was not restricted to the chosen area of focus. For example, one provider found a core issue in leadership was developing effective assessment processes that were manageable and meaningful, and worked to support adults in using the *Kei tua o te pae* notion of notice, recognise and respond; another reported that teachers working on transition to school focus gained confidence in portfolio work and the value of their documentation.

Some services found the MoE focus areas did not foreground aspects they and/or ERO were targeting – particularly assessment and planning.

Parent and whānau engagement in children's learning

While not all providers included qualitative examples of the impact of PD on services for this focus area, the overall impression is this is an area where many services believe they made progress. Given this was an underpinning component of the PD programme but rarely a service's chosen focus area, the progress indicated in Table 4.2, and in the qualitative examples is impressive. At times evidence comes from direct reporting on this focus area. For example:

  Of the 57 centres doing Rubric A (parent and whānau engagement) the 3 that showed a shift of 3 rating points were ones who identified themselves as 'beginning to be effective'. By the end of period 1 these centres were discussing children's learning with parents and children were connecting what they were doing at home with what they were doing in the centre.

Often, however, the examples arise in general discussion or in the context of a different focus area. For example:

Involving parents/whānau in children's learning continues to make up a large part of the leadership focus area. Many services have noticed that a focus on this area has contributed to an increase in the number of parents/whānau discussing their child's learning.

The range and number of examples included in the provider reports suggests this is an area where most services are both comfortable with and committed to making change.

Effective teaching practices for Māori children

Some reports include rich examples of changes in teacher practices in relation to improving outcomes for Māori children, and it is clear this focus was central to their PD programme. For example, there is a strong awareness of Māori perspectives in the following description of services working with a focus on social competence:

> Working with parents on developing an understanding of a Māori values framework, has also supported parents to value certain qualities such as tinihanga and whakatoi, rather than thinking about it as 'difficult' behaviour. In one centre the adults shifted their lens from seeing a little boy as intimidating others when he does the haka in front of them, to acknowledge his sense of rangatiratanga and whakatoi. The adults were able to support him to be conscious of other children while protecting his mana, rangatiratanga and whakatoi.

> Discussing Māori values frameworks such as Mason Durie's *Te whare tapa whā*, Rose Pere's *Te Wheke* models; developed a deeper understanding of the core Māori values and the relevance of that … for holistic learning and development in a social and culturally diverse world.

Whilst some PD provider reports offer multiple examples of shifts in teacher practices, significant examples of impact on children's learning, and references to shifts in policy, details within several of the reports suggest this focus area may be one of the more problematic ones for providers and/or services:

- In some provider reports, the focus on Māori learners is less evident. For example: "Rubric A, B and C ratings were embedded in the work facilitators were doing with centres in the identified focus areas. Rubric A and C indicators were reviewed by all participating centres who rated themselves on these two rubrics at the start of PD and after completing PD". That same provider reported all 57 participating centres have identified a focus from and integrated rubrics A and C but that only 20 engaged with Rubric B.

- One provider reported that while many teachers found engaging with this focus personally satisfying, they were not always confident to incorporate it into their teaching practices. "I need to understand what this all means for myself before I can even begin to think about what it could mean for children."

- This focus met with mixed responses from some participants:

> The focus on engaging with low income families, with special emphasis on Māori and Pasifika families generated robust and at time heated discussions in the centres as teachers developed their own understanding of culturally responsive environments and pedagogy. Some of the learning from these facilitated sessions has been immediate while other slower systemic changes may take time to realize and become visible.

> The inclusion of rubrics enabled a specific focus on Māori learners and sparked a curiosity about Māori pedagogy for a number of participants. A large proportion … make reference to being there for all children, and although initially reluctant to single out Māori learners, over time they appreciate the value of 'zooming in' on this group of learners and critically reflecting. A strategy to focus participants on how Māori learners experience the curriculum has been to ask participants to consider the changes through the experiences of a child, and monitor through assessment for at least one Māori learner. This strategy has been minimally effective… we will persist…. It is more about ineffective assessment practices than an unwillingness to showcase learning and progress for Māori learners.

> [PD Provider] has come to understand the daunting nature of te ao Māori perspectives on educators. This was a major influence for those services that withdrew.

- This focus area currently has the lowest percentage of services showing an improved rubric rating on completion of the PD (see Table 4.2).
- There were an unexpectedly high number of withdrawals from one of the PD programmes that prioritised Māori perspectives, with several services offering as their reason that the PD did not meet their current focus.

For more detailed discussion see Chapter 5: ECE services' responsiveness to children's language, culture and identity.

Culturally responsive and effective teaching practices for Pasifika children

No references to centres working with Rubric B1 were identified in Provider reports. There were however references to providers working with Pasifika services, and to services working with Pasifika families. For example: A facilitator in a multicultural service that included Pasifika families, had discussions with families about "what is learning in this place? For these children?" It was noted that identifying the learning that is valued helped parents to express their aspirations for children and teachers to find culturally appropriate ways to integrate parents' aspirations. A further comment acknowledged the importance of providing appropriate PD facilitation:

> Where a number of Pacific nations services have progressed slowly, the provider plans to bring in additional support for facilitators, and to reallocate workloads so the facilitator who has had most success with these centres, works with more of them.

Effective educational leadership: culturally responsive learning contexts and systems

Although one of the identified focus areas within the contracts, provider reports indicate a surprisingly high number of participating services chose to focus on leadership. This may be because it was seen as the most flexible focus area, with the ability to touch on a number of topics:

- Philosophy review: This was seen to be an essential first step for some services.

- Distributed leadership: Ensuring knowledge and competence is spread across the team; teachers demonstrating distributed leadership and functioning more as a team.

- Assessment processes: Services who did not have effective assessment processes found this focus gave an opportunity to improve on that.

- Involving whānau in children's learning: One provider reported that involving parents/whānau in children's learning made up a large part of the leadership focus area.

A variety of changes in teacher practices were described by providers, often with a flow-on effect on children's learning recognised:

> At many centres it has been noticed that adults need to learn when to intervene and when to stand back and allow children to access their own materials, create their own experiences and be able to communicate their needs and interests in their learning.

Commentary specifically related to culturally responsive learning contexts and systems is addressed in Chapter 5's focus on identity, language and culture.

Effective focus on literacy

Where possible the focus areas of Literacy and Numeracy are reviewed separately, but some services worked on them simultaneously and consequently commentary in provider reports often combines these. A literacy focus was not prominent in all PD programmes for the first round, but was one of the most frequently chosen focus areas (see Table 4.1). For those providers promoting this focus, a frequent goal was to extend participants' understanding of what constitutes literacy learning. There are descriptions of facilitators emphasising literacy as more than reading and writing, introducing the notion of multiliteracies, and discussing the importance of oral language as the basis for all literacy learning. This may be a response to the situation one provider describes:

> We have observed some surprisingly low levels of teacher confidence in content knowledge for early literacy… this is seen in the number of centres providing a very narrow, structured approach, focussed almost entirely on activities involving decoding print text, while overlooking oral language learning and conversations. They assume this is what schools require of them.

Literacy was a focus area where some providers emphasised the significance of the shifts that services have made:

> In one Pasifika centre adults have moved from a supervising role to actively engage with children and engage in conversations.

There is also evidence of the impact on children's learning such as "Children are becoming readers and lovers of books" and "Children are now more accepting of literacy – recognising names and writing and recognising words and pictures indoors and outdoors".

Providers identified several enablers supporting shifts in practice:

- Extending participants' understanding of literacy learning, and how it may be integrated into everyday experiences
- Providing a literacy workshop led to teachers having more confidence and capacity to extend children's literacy opportunities in their programmes
- Using *Kei tua o te pae* to develop a stronger understanding of literacy
- Interviewing school teachers to find out what literacy skills they expect to see when children transition.
- One provider referred to the Letterland programme, used because local schools have used it. Teachers reviewed where children are able to engage with phonics and patterns in their play and how teachers can scaffold literacy learning.

Effective focus on mathematics

Not all PD providers had services that selected this focus area in the first round and one provider identified services had little interest in this focus area. For services choosing this focus, a range of positive outcomes are reported, including teachers being more aware of responding to maths learning across the curriculum, using mathematical terminology, and mathematical learning being increasingly evident in learning stories.

Enablers supporting shifts in practice included:

- Extending participants' understanding of mathematics learning, and how it may be integrated into everyday experiences
- Presenting a seminar – in-depth knowledge from an expert
- Using *Kei tua o te pae* to support stronger understanding of early numeracy
- Interviewing school teachers to find out what numeracy skills they expect to see when children transition
- Introducing the new MoE numeracy resource, found to be very useful

Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers

A focus on infants and toddlers was a less frequent focus choice for services in Programme 1, but it was the focus area with the highest percentage of services (93.3%) reporting an improvement in rubric rating (see Table 4.2). PD providers saw changes in teachers' image of, and attitudes towards, younger children as key:

> There has been a significant shift in the ways teachers view the child. Teachers are 'tuning in' and 'listening' for the children's needs, their questions and working theories. Teachers are gaining deeper understandings of the learning which is occurring for infants and toddlers, providing increasing opportunities for children to revisit and re-engage with experiences, consolidating and mastering new learning.

Documented changes in teacher practices included:

- Teachers 'slowing down' to accommodate to younger children's rhythms
- 'Key teacher' strategies being implemented
- Recognising the need for smaller groups for toddlers
- Greater understanding of the learning that is occurring and more thoughtful documentation
- Providing environments that allow for independent and uninterrupted exploration and play
- More opportunities for children to be involved and actively participate, to be empowered and make decisions.

However, several barriers to shifts in practice were also noted:

- Services using roster systems for feeding, nappy-changing, sleep times
- Adult-prescribed routine means little attention is paid to transitioning moments or the individual child's rhythm
- An over-emphasis on care with reduced opportunities for free movement and exploration
- Teachers stressed because of administrative compliance requirements, insisted on by management.

Effective focus on transitions to school

In some provider reports, information for services who worked on transitions to school is combined with transitions into and within the service, and some services chose to work on both. Those services that focused on transition to school are reported to have improved practices in a variety of ways, often as a result of having had contact with schools. For example: "Teachers more aware of current thinking and practices in schools … some recognising that structured activities are not what primary teachers necessarily value". There is also evidence of the positive impact of this PD for both families and children.

Effective focus on transitions (into and within the service)

Relatively few services chose to focus on transitions into and within the service. However, it was recognised by one provider as particularly important in Christchurch with families transitioning in and out of centres, with services joining together, and with families under stress. Among the topics services focused on were:

- Reviewing centre routines and transition times through the day
- Reviewing policies and procedures around transitions and sharing these with parents
- Building recording systems to increase communication across the team
- Transition of new children and families into the centre
- Preparing children for transitions over a longer period
- Finding ways children can become more active participants in their own programmes.

Improvements in teacher practices noted included:

- Strengthened induction processes leading to teachers developing quality relationships with families, with teachers having insight into families' funds of knowledge, and valuing and responding to these. As a result children settled more quickly and were more confident.
- Reviewing transition times through the day leading to the environment becoming calmer and less stressful for children and adults, and children spending more time engaging in self-initiated activities. Increases in children's creative and reflective thinking, and stronger relationship between children and teachers were also noted; teachers reported they were recognising learning more quickly.

Effective focus on social competence

PD provider reports indicate a range of ways this focus impacted on teacher practices. PD work that increased participants' understanding of the psychological and developmental foundations for children's development of social included:

- Broadening understanding from a narrow focus on behaviour management to the broader concept of fostering social relationships

- Delivering a series of emotional awareness workshops in response to teachers' interest in the psychological foundations for the development of social competence

- Exploring theories of brain development to support teachers' understanding of the importance of attachment for children's social competence

- Clearer understanding of child development theory helped teachers understand children's behaviour

- Māori values frameworks such as Mason Durie's *Te Whare tapa whā* and Rose Pere's *Te Wheke* were explored.

Reported changes in teacher attitudes and knowledge included:

- Changing the image of child from 'naughty' to 'becoming socially competent'

- Becoming aware of the limitations teachers sometimes put on children

- Understanding the relationship between chemical changes in the brain and children's levels of anxiety, leading to a deeper understanding of the importance of a close contact support person

- Using their deeper understanding of emotions to 'tune in' to children, recognising and validating the emotion and needs being expressed

- Developing an understanding of a Māori values framework supported adults to value certain qualities rather than defining them as 'difficult'

- Observing play more for surprises and to understand what toddlers are doing from a deeper level

- Teachers being more aware of their power role in solving conflicts, aiming towards mediation rather than the teacher solving the conflict

- Teachers' writing about competent, capable children in their learning stories.

There are also reports of improved teacher practices with a clear flow-on effect on children's learning:

- Teachers providing programmes with more attention to children's interests and learning as foundational to promoting social competency

- Enabling children to be part of the decision-making process empowered children to take responsibility for their actions

- Review of structured times has allowed children to experience more uninterrupted play. It has also fostered self-help skills in children with rolling morning and afternoon teas

- Teachers are offering children opportunities to develop their ability to negotiate, cope with changes, use language to express their feelings, see other points of view and exercise self-control

- With a deeper understanding of Māori pedagogical concepts such as tuakana-teina, teachers are encouraging children to work alongside peers to strengthen social competency skills.

In the interviews, providers were asked:

- Which focus areas have your PD programmes specifically focused on?
- In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract improved teacher practice in the focus areas?
- What particular successes and/or challenges have you faced in improving teacher practices in the PD focus areas?

This discussion is structured around responses to those questions.

Which focus areas have PD programmes focused on?

It was clear providers are covering the focus areas in a wide range of ways (as indicated in PD provider reports). Some are working in all areas; others are working on different focus areas in each phase. For one provider it was not clear how full coverage was being provided. Those providers also working in the national leadership and infant and toddler programmes made references to that work.

Providers reported introducing focus areas to services in a variety of ways. Some began with the service's topic, some used the rubrics as a starting point (See also Chapter 8, Evaluation Question 14), and others did "an initial needs analysis type of event with the facilitator." Two providers highlighted how they were incorporating the three core components alongside the chosen focus areas. For example:

> One of the first things that we decided on … is that no matter what the chosen focus area was we would always look at it from the lenses of the rubrics A, B and C. So if a centre chose literacy it would be from the perspective of how do we engage parents in literacy? What kinds of literacies are coming through? And what kinds of literacies can the parent and the community bring to the centre? We did the same with the Māori children. What's the literacy that the Māori community and families are bringing in? And the same for Pasifika. And the educational leadership question which was rubric C was also tied to what is the centre doing as a pedagogic leader to actually bring in the community and the parents in those perspectives so we did that with literacy. We did it with numeracy and with social competence, transitions, infants and toddlers. I think that helped bring the conversation always back to the core.

The question of services wanting to explore a question which was not apparently one of the focus areas was mentioned, but appeared for most not to be an issue: "But inside all of those there are so many possibilities really" and "The facilitators are pretty good at sort of saying well, we can do that, but we can do it through the focus areas". Another reported services "really like the choice, they feel spoilt for choice".

In what ways have PD programmes improved teacher practice in the focus areas?

Providers did not refer to rubrics ratings in describing how PD programmes have improved teacher practice - they gave qualitative examples. Some related to specific focus areas, but others ranged across the focus areas underlining the responsive and flexible nature of the delivery. Providers highlighted the interconnectedness of the focus areas:

> A number of the teams also mentioned in the beginning when we were doing the needs analysis and trying to establish the plan for the centre, they kept saying 'aren't they correlated?' They flow into each other … and they could see the connections so I think it wasn't really mutually exclusive areas.

Providers also reminded interviewers of the information in their milestone reports, referring us back to those for additional examples.

Successes and challenges in PD focus areas

Parents and whānau engagement in children's learning

Engaging parents and whānau in children's learning was mentioned by all providers, but one discussed this focus area in depth. They described the challenges:

> At the beginning of the process … most of the centres would say that we have got a great relationship with the parents, we have great conversations. And then we would ask them to gather data as to what is that conversation about? And that's when we really get to the fact that there wasn't really conversation.

> Or "nice shoes". Which is great. It's a good start. Or in some cases it was about diapers or you haven't paid the fees, that kind of thing. Or you're late again for pick up. But it wasn't really about what did your child enjoy today. So I think that was one of the challenges … it wasn't just about any kind of parent conversation but about a conversation that makes parents partners in the process. Getting them involved and planning for children.

Other challenges identified were:

- Teachers identifying some parents as "difficult"
- Parents seeing teachers as "the professionals"; another provider identified this as a particular difficulty when working with Pasifika communities.
- Teachers' expectations about their role with parents
- Services with no or "tokenistic" parent committees.

Providers described many changes services had made – encouraging parents to 'hang out', providing a couch for parents, offering warm drinks, inviting them to be part of the programme planning, inviting grandparents to read stories at mat times. A detailed example of success was:

> I was just thinking of a centre who didn't really believe in parent/whānau engagement at the beginning of the contract. It was in a very diverse community. … So we started off and the rubrics challenged them a bit. They did a self-review and the results kept coming back to engagement with parents, valuing children's language, cultural identity. I've just heard recently that … some of the teachers have been along to a Saudi women's group. They've had a day where they had a fish and chip evening. Very Pākehā fish and chip evening and they realised then the diversity of cultures. This came out of some of the work. So then they decided to have a night, family cultural night, and they got quite a big response from that, I think, where parents bought food. So this went from being quite resistant at the beginning, engaging with the rubrics, doing a self-review looking at social competence. And part of it was how do you engage with parents around social competencies? It was all quite interesting. It's come around in a big circle.

Effective teaching practices for Māori children

The strongest examples were offered by the two providers who identify as Māori. One described approaching all the focus areas "from a very bi-cultural perspective—there are always strong Māori elements in there" (For more detail see the discussion in Chapter 5, Evaluation Questions 6 and 7).

Culturally responsive and effective teaching practices for Pasifika children

There were no references to services choosing this focus area. Providers' descriptions of working with Pasifika services have been incorporated into discussion of the other focus areas.

Effective educational leadership: culturally responsive learning contexts and systems

A range of detailed examples were provided within the broad scope of 'Educational leadership', most of which related to planning and assessment:

In the cluster I'm working with, because we're particularly looking at how we plan for children and programming and so forth, they're actually thinking about children first and they're actually identifying meaningful learning for children rather than setting up curriculum areas and letting the children have a free for all, they're actually thinking about it and reflecting about what children—and how to extend on that. And how to involve parents. I mean, it might be only in a small degree but it's more than what they were before.

One very detailed example related to a Samoan language centre, offered because "it just gives you a good example of where significant hours are put in, the shifts and the changes that can be made":

They started this research question, 'what ways can our documentation support children to grow their ideas further so they deepen and widen their explorations, and continuity and complexity of children's learning [is] supported'. So they wanted to choose something where they had documentation because they had nothing, the children maybe had about three learning stories a year and they were not what I would consider learning stories. Now every child has at least one learning story a month … and they're writing about real things …. building complexity into their learning, their portfolios are fabulous, they're available for families, families take them away, they have portfolio evenings which are well attended. We had a lovely surprise from the ministry because they gave us a full license back in March last year.

And then some of the key shifts in practice, teachers talk about this and what it meant for them. …Sometimes I would write the story for the teacher, just tell me, tell me like you would tell the excitement in terms of talking to the parent at the end of the day…and so I'd write that down and then gradually moving back from that… And then teachers finding, "actually it's not as hard as I thought, I don't have to do all of this teacher speak stuff, 'use fine motor coordination', make sure I get that stuck in there somewhere. I can talk about his curiosity and the way he stayed on task and when he allowed his friends to come in and even though it was hard he kept going" …So let's talk about those kind of real things for children early on. And the biggest thing they do though is every week they share their stories with each other so they read their learning stories out and then what happens is they think about how they can build on those, how they can widen, deepen it, what resources they might need.

Effective focus on literacy

Literacy was only discussed in tandem with numeracy, and comments described the process, rather than giving detailed examples of success. For example:

With literacy and numeracy I know the other facilitator, she works really hard with the centres that she has – she does literacy and numeracy – on really spending time with children and, you know, getting them thinking rather than just leaving them completely or doing it for them. … And then we always come back to what the Ministry says too. What are their outcomes for children and how do you know? And I think that comes back to evaluation and a lot of centres haven't been doing good evaluation.

Effective focus on mathematics

One provider identified this as an area where teachers believed they had "really grown their knowledge as teachers"; "a lot of them have said that it's because of their own preconceived fears or their own beliefs around their numeracy abilities that they haven't been quite confident about what programme they offered to children in terms of numeracy". Two providers gave examples of successful changes in teacher practices in this focus area:

I visited a centre that had been to one of our numeracy workshops and the staff went back and suddenly went, 'yes, we *do* do this, we have got that, we need more resources, let's put this into the budget and the planning' and when I followed up they were so excited because they realized that they could take numeracy outside, it didn't have to be inside. If the boys wanted to count in the sandpit and build in the sandpit and use sticks in the sandpit, that's where the numeracy experience could take place.

Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers

There were only passing references to this focus area; for example, a reference to a workshop on "respectful practice for infants and toddlers" and the change in teachers' practice when "they've reviewed their processes and looked at how they can improve those for better outcomes for children". Other references included:

> Infants and toddlers: we're just starting to kick off into that because I'd hoped that the national stuff would get a bit of traction and we would just be able to step our teachers into that, but that hasn't quite got off the ground so we're just starting up an infant and toddler cluster. And we're also looking to target that for home based as well.

Effective focus on transitions to school

Two providers talked in detail about transition to school. One example described how a teacher had visited the school to which a child was transitioning; "she'd gone and sat in on the classroom and gathered some photos and some evidence and taken it back to the centre to share with that child and that family as part of the relationship building". A second teacher had also visited the new entrant classroom "and now he knows how things work, he feels more confident to go back to the families and go, 'actually we need a bag with this and we need this and we need that' because he's got first-hand experience" As a result a hui had been held with parents. In another example:

> One service has got a programme they're just starting. It's called Ako Manga and it's been given that name by a teacher of the classroom where the children go to…. They were going to have a literacy and mathematics focus but, after our enquiry, they've gone and talked to the schools about 'what are the sorts of things our children need to come into school ready with?' and I said 'ask them what kind of programme they run, what are the teaching strategies the teachers use, what are the sorts of language the children?' so that's that language, culture, identity stuff. And when they came back, they decided to go down the 'it'll be an enquiry *learning* programme'. So it's not a literacy and maths programme transition, it's a skills of being an enquirer and knowing how to use the tools….And they also decided not to limit it to 4 year olds, they've said any child who's interested and has a curiosity, like a project or an investigation, can use that transition programme as part of… so there's this sort of more expansive thinking around transition going on.

Effective focus on transitions (into and within the service)

There was only example related to transitions:

> A lot of stuff around induction into the centre, coming back to parents … well if you want parents to participate, how you induct them in sets the tone. So if you want to hurry parents in and hurry them out, then they will always feel hurried out. So we've looked at slowing that down. So that's the transition stuff and they're looking at doing that."

Effective focus on social competence

Discussion here included an interesting dichotomy of opinion about the relationship between this focus area and the Ministry's *Incredible Years* programme. On the one hand a provider said:

> There are some strong synergies between aspects of it when you look at the programme. We have got one of our facilitators active as an IYT facilitator as well so we do get to know the programme quite well ….Clearly the *Incredible Years* is more around behaviour management, problem children, rather than the social competence approach.

However, another provider identified this programme as being "completely at loggerheads" with the views of social competency they were promoting through the principles of *Te Whāriki*.

A further provider discussed in detail the approach taken to social competence work with services:

> We've taken an emotional angle to the social competence and that is off the chart. ... The whole idea is observe the behaviour, make sense of what the underlying emotional need is and respond to the need, not the behaviour and that is just flipping teachers' minds.

Another described the way in which an enquiry in this area could flow out into others: "Even though they chose social competency, they actually ended up looking at other parts of the competencies. You can look at social competency through literacy, through culture so in a way it's just been a way to begin a discussion". This provider believed that engaging with competencies rather than behaviour management had been "huge for some centres" and identified it as an area of new teacher knowledge for many – "It's a totally different perspective".

Successes and/or challenges for providers in improving teacher practices in the PD focus areas

Successes

Among the other identified successes were:

- Teachers "communicating with each other on a different level than they would have before. Strategically questioning and reflecting with each other and evaluating what's happening."

- Teachers knowing the learner

- Shared values and beliefs within a teaching team

- More consistency in practice and expectations: "the consistency in practice has been huge"

- Stronger teams, better teamwork, staff meeting more regularly: "they're actually talking with each other about children where they weren't doing that before. They actually spend time with each other"

- Teams are more reflective

- Leadership growth

- Services identifying their actions and goals: "It's coming from them…. So that helps improve teacher practice. Because it's about what they've chosen"

- Teachers taking responsibility for their own learning: "Rather than just waiting for us to come in and deliver some work to them, they've actually been really motivated and … going away, and … you get there and you know, they're buzzing and they're excited and they're doing all these things, so that taking responsibility for their own learning I think is huge"

- Teachers' excitement in "fulfilling their goals"

- Teachers re-enthused: "it's not so much just a job anymore because now they've got ownership of the philosophy, they're invested."

- Teachers engaging with parents and whānau

- Parents playing a more active role in children's learning: "they're starting to understand that process and what's happening for their children", a lot more parents' voice in their learning stories

- Making a difference at home. "We … have many stories of parents doing things differently at home now from what they have learned in the PD"

- Networking between services: "another huge success"; sharing "ideas and thoughts and environments with others, it does empower them".

Challenges

- Entrenched attitudes and values

- Reflective practice not part of the culture

- Leadership: "The critical aspect in all of this is leadership in centres and where leadership is prepared to be open and want change it's amazing."

- Involving management: "Where management are prepared to come to our workshops that makes a huge difference… But many of them will stand aside"

- Management resistant to change

- "Diverse opinions, understandings and experiences" among teachers

- Inadequate pedagogical knowledge/practice among teachers: "there's a huge variety of teacher practice….So sometimes it's very, very hard going because what we would think would be, like sometimes taken for granted isn't, so sometimes it's very much about really going back to the basics.

- No regular staff meetings: And "shifting them from talking about housekeeping at meetings".

- Teachers, with little or no non-contact time: "I think one of the biggest challenges … is the non- contact time for teachers"

- Unpaid attendance at PD sessions

- Relievers not included in PD

- Teachers not focused on professional learning and improvement (this was linked in particular to some teachers trained outside New Zealand)

- Services where there were a high proportion of untrained staff and/or relievers

- Staff turnover

- Lack of centre resources: "it's also the environment that they work in … there's no work space away from children. Very cramped shared environments"; lack of Māori resources

Some providers also commented on their difficulties in assessing change through not being in the services to observe practices, and one grappled with the issue of "How do we gather the evidence from children?"

ONLINE SURVEY

This discussion includes:

- The spread of focus areas covered

- Quantitative evidence of services' assessment of the effectiveness of the PD programme to teaching in their focus area(s) and their satisfaction with this aspect of their programme

- Services' examples of change in teacher practices in the focus areas

The spread of focus areas

Table 4.3 shows the spread of focus areas services responding to the survey were engaged in. Many of the 218 services who answered this question engaged with more than one area. Unsurprisingly, the spread of services' identified focus areas broadly replicates the spread of focus areas in PD providers' reports (see Table 4.1 above). Both indicate that *Mathematics* and *Education and care of infants and toddlers* were the least frequently chosen focus areas. *Leadership* is the most frequently chosen focus area; this figure may be even higher if some or all of the 15 services who identified their focus area as *Other* and then indicated it related to planning and assessment were included here.

Other areas services specified included: Bicultural/Māori focus (15), planning and assessment (15), self-review (7), the *Incredible Years* programme (3) Pedagogical leadership (1), team building (1), plus a range of other individual topics and/or provider names.

Isolating those services who are only enrolled in either programme two and/or three showed a very similar spread of focus areas; *Leadership* was again the most frequently identified focus area and *Numeracy* and *Education and care of children aged under 2* the least frequently chosen areas.

Table 4.3:   Services' identification of focus area(s) for the PD programme

Focus areas	Response	Percentage
Literacy	78	36%
Numeracy	51	23%
Transitions (into and within services; from ECE to school)	70	32%
Developing children's social competence	77	35%
Education and care of children aged under two years	38	17%
Leadership	88	40%
Other (please specify)	48	22%

Quantitative evidence of services' assessment of the effectiveness of the PD programme

The survey provides three sets of quantitative data which offer evidence of services' assessment of the impact of the PD programme on their practices in the focus area(s) – the effectiveness of the PD programme to their teaching in the focus areas, their satisfaction with the PD programme in relation to their learning in the focus areas, and their rating of the effectiveness of their teaching in the focus areas before their PD programme and as a result of their engagement in the PD programme.

Respondents were asked to rate the overall effectiveness of their PD programme. Table 4.4 summarizes services' assessment of the effectiveness in relation to teaching in their focus area. Ninety-three per cent of respondents found the PD programme had been either 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to their teaching in their focus area(s).

Table 4.4:   Services' assessment of the effectiveness of the PD programme in making a difference to teaching in the focus area(s)

	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not very effective	Ineffective	Unsure	Total
To your teaching in the focus area(s)	50% (100)	43% (85)	5% (10)	1.5% (3)	0.5% (1)	199

Analysis of these by programme shows that for all groups 90% or more rated their PD programme to have been 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to teaching in the focus area(s). Proportionately more of those enrolled in programme one plus either programmes two and/or three gave these ratings (97.5%). Proportionately more respondents in this group also rated their PD as 'Very effective'. Confirming evidence of services' high levels of satisfaction comes from responses to questions about overall levels of satisfaction with the PD in a later section of the survey. Table 4.5 shows that 95.5% of respondents were 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' in relation to the focus area(s).

Table 4.5:   Services' overall level of satisfaction with the PD programme in relation to the learning in the focus area(s).

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
Your learning in your focus area(s)	60% (99)	35.5% (59)	3.5% (6)	1% (2)	166

Analysis by programme again shows that the highest proportion (74% of 35 respondents) who rated themselves as 'Very satisfied' were those enrolled in Programme 1 plus either Programme 2 and/or 3. However, in all groups more than 50% of respondents selected 'Very satisfied'. Analysis by length of involvement in the PD programme shows, not surprisingly, that the proportion of those 'Very satisfied' rose from 33% of those just starting to 69% for those who were close to finishing, had finished, or had begun a second round of PD.

Eight services indicated they were 'Dissatisfied' or 'Very dissatisfied' with impact of the PD programme on their learning in the focus area(s). These came from all PD programme options and from every stage of their PD programme.

The final quantitative evidence of services' very positive assessment of the impact of their PD is provided in Table 4.6, which compares services' assessment of the effectiveness their teaching in the focus area(s) both before their engagement in PD and as a result of their engagement.

Table 4.6:   Services ranking of the effectiveness of teaching in their focus area(s) before and after the PD programme

Percentage ranking Highly Effective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Highly Effective as a result of the PD programme
7%	55%
Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective before PD programme	**Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective as a result of the PD programme**
39%	4%

Analysing the data by programme shows that:

- In all programmes more than 95% of respondents considered their services to be 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat Effective' in their focus areas as a result of the PD.

- A smaller proportion of respondents enrolled in programme one (N=71; 55%) considered their service to have been either 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in the focus area(s) before the PD began. The comparable figures for those enrolled in programme one plus either programme two and/or three was 65% (N = 37) and for those enrolled in programme two and/or three was (N=77; 62%).

- A higher proportion of those enrolled in programme one plus either programme two and/or three (67%) identified as 'Very effective' as a result of the PD programme. The comparable figure for programme one was 55% and for those enrolled in programme two and/or three was 49%.

Perhaps as significant as the high proportion now rating their service as 'Highly effective', is the fact that 39% of services retrospectively assessed themselves to have been either 'Ineffective' or 'Not very effective' before undertaking the PD. It is likely that this figure in part reflects their greater awareness of what constitutes highly effective practice as a result of their engagement in PD and/or with the rubrics (For further discussion of this point see Chapter 8).

Services' examples of changes in teaching practices in the focus areas

The survey asked for examples of how practices in the focus(s) area have changed. The great majority of the 170 responses were positive – phrases such as "the excitement that has been built within the team", "hugely beneficial" and "extraordinary" – are used. A few comments were less positive. One comment suggested changes may have been temporary; four indicated no/minimal change occurred as a result of the PD. There was recognition in some responses that the impact of the PD programme extended beyond the original focus area:

> The programme whilst focused on transitions had multiple outcomes being that we improved our transitions, but also developed the team's knowledge understanding and ability to be pedagogical leaders. We challenged our thinking about culture, and identity and whilst this was minimal it was a beginning to thinking about these always. The team focus of self-review/action research improved understanding of rigorous review and initiated team interest in action research.

Parent and whānau engagement in children's learning

Services' rating of the effectiveness of their PD programme in making a difference to 'engaging all parents/whānau in their children's learning' are shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Services' assessment of the effectiveness of their PD programme in relation to engaging all parents/whānau in their children's learning

	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not very effective	Ineffective	Unsure	Total
To engaging all parents/whānau in their children's learning	35% (69)	49% (96)	11% (22)	3% (6)	2% (4)	197

Analysis by programme groups showed similar results across all programme types. Services were also asked to rate their own effectiveness in this area, both before engaging in PD, and as result of having engaged in PD (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Services ranking of their effectiveness in engaging all parents/whānau in their children's learning before and after their PD programme

Percentage ranking Highly Effective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Highly Effective as a result of the PD programme
16%	43%
Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective as a result of the PD programme
34%	8%

Analysis by programme type of the 170 responses shows:

• Proportionately fewer services enrolled in programme one assessed their practices in this area to have been 'Very effective' before the PD programme (N=64; 12%) but proportionately more of those in this group assessed their practices as 'Very effective' as a result of their engagement in the PD (45%).

• The 14 services that assessed their practices as 'Not very effective' or 'Ineffective' after their engagement in the PD programme were spread across all PD programme groups analysed.

The question 'Please give an example of how your practices have changed as a result of your engagement in your PD programme in terms of how you engage all parents/whānau in their children's learning' elicited 162 responses. Twelve indicated this was not an area of focus and/or that they had little or nothing to report. Dominant themes emerging in the other responses were: encouraging parent involvement; improving communication with parents and

whānau; sharing information with parents/whānau; building authentic teacher-whānau partnerships; and involving parents/whānau in the service's assessment processes.

Encouraging parent involvement

> For the first time our parents now stay and observe or participate with their children, there is a real culture of learning from both educators and parents alike. We recently had a parent day for Olympics and had a huge turnout of parents and even those parents who did not come they still provided kai for the shared lunch which would never have happened six months ago.

Improving communication with families/whānau

A broad theme of improving communication with families was evident. Reference was made to using a range of channels – notice boards, focus boards, newsletters, daily take-home notebooks, parent-teacher interviews, parent evenings, conversations, questionnaires, blogs:

> There has been a huge discussion about what information parents need opposed to what teachers want them to know, and how we can be more effective at getting our message across to them, i.e., rather than a whole lot of written information perhaps engaging with them at specific times, parent evenings and booklets that use photographs instead of a lot of text?

Sharing information with families/whānau

In some responses the focus was on sharing information with families – and many of the examples related to the services' focus area(s): "Newsletters give parents ideas on working with children in a positive way. Little snippets of 'how to manage' have recently appeared".

Building partnerships

Other responses suggested a deeper commitment to building partnerships with families/ whānau:

> Families are asked for their opinion and knowledge. Tuakana/teina is used reciprocally. There is more joint ako e.g. Children are teaching families, families are teaching children, teachers are learning from families and families are learning from teachers

Involving parents/whānau in assessment processes

The final theme focused on involving parents/whānau in assessment processes. This included changes in teacher attitudes, as well as developing strategies to encourage whānau involvement. Teachers were described as having "more confidence to discuss their children's learning with parents", and being "more relaxed around approaching parents to discuss their aspirations for their child". Some of the changes reported are significant but others appear to be less significant, perhaps reflecting this was not a key focus, or that changes had yet to be implemented: "We did document and display information with parents/whānau in mind and a deeper focus on learning" and "This is an area that we are still working on and have yet to implement".

Responses from some parent-led services highlighted the involvement of parents in the PD, and the value of PD in increasing their confidence in writing learning stories. For example:

> We are working on encouraging parents/whānau to get involved and do at least one learning story per session if it is not for their own children then for someone else's that they have interacted with on session, which helps us extend our children's emergent interests and passions and also makes parents aware of how they can extend their children at centre and at home.

Effective teaching practices for Māori children

Nine of the 170 responses to the request for "an example of how your practices in your focus area(s) have changed" referred to biculturalism and/or use of te reo Māori and/or tikanga Māori; seven of these were from services enrolled only in Programme 1. Two responses focused on biculturalism: "We have had a huge change in our biculturalism". Two focused on

teachers' increased confidence in using te reo Māori, and a further three linked this to children's use: "The children are using more te reo and it is natural and not forced. The teachers are more positive in their thoughts and ideas towards language and tikanga". One response focused on learning stories, added "More understanding of provision for Māori" (For further discussion of services' responsive to language, culture and identity, see Chapter 5, Evaluation Questions 6 and 7).

Culturally responsive and effective teaching practices for Pasifika children

No responses specifically identified Pasifika children and/or communities (For further discussion of services' responsive to language, culture and identity, see Chapter 5, Evaluation Questions 6 and 7).

Effective educational leadership: Culturally responsive learning contexts and systems

Of the 170 responses, 44 focused on aspects of broad pedagogical leadership. Five themes were apparent: assessment; teacher awareness of practices; programming; leadership; and team building.

Sixteen responses related to changes in assessment processes and practices, reflecting the emphasis on these described in provider reports and interviews. A typical service response was: "Our learning stories are more robust, more in-depth containing a lot more information about the child and the learning that the child is involved in". A more detailed example was:

> We have worked extensively on the learning that is documented in the children's portfolios. We looked at what teaching and learning happens during the day and what teaching and learning was visible in the children's portfolios. We asked ourselves if this was evident enough? What were we documenting? Were the links between story to story evident? As a result the teachers have almost stopped doing group learning stories, have really focused in on what the individual child is doing, worked on clear links between follow on learning and assessed ways in which we document…. The portfolios now clearly document children's dispositions, strengths, interests and links to learning. This was all happening in the centre and we knew a lot about the children, however it was not evident in the way the portfolios used to be.

Twelve responses related to teacher reflection and awareness of their teacher practices in general: "Not assuming as much during my teaching practice, reflecting, critiquing and really looking at our teaching team and how we can continue to extend and analyse what we are doing? Can we do it better? Are we developing real relationships with each and every child?"

Ten responses related to aspects of programming, particularly better use of resources and more effective environments: "We have changed our entire environment, our programming is now working with real understanding of the elements involved and the overall confidence of our entire teaching team has been extraordinary".

Of the six that focused on leadership, four were individuals reflecting on their leadership role, and two related to developing shared leadership within the service, for example: "Awareness of individual responsibility as pedagogical leader above and beyond positional leadership". Three responses related to team building: "We did not have a large core group and an effective team and now coming up to AGM time we [have] a good group coming through".

Effective focus on literacy

Five responses referred to literacy including one that mentioned multiliteracies. Most comments were brief but indicated a range of approaches were being implemented, e.g., "In depth understanding of literacy has led to recognition of the value of experiences children partake in, articulating how literacy is happening in our environment and the value of it".

Effective focus on mathematics

There were five references to mathematics/numeracy, and increasing teacher knowledge was a consistent theme. For example: "We discovered that we were not providing as much assistance with helping educators [at home] understand mathematical learning and through providing them with resources they now have a better understanding of what to provide for the children to help learning through mathematics".

Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers

Only four responses referred specifically to infants and toddlers, and three of these highlighted providing appropriate environment and resources. For example: We have better ideas and layouts for engaging our under 2's. We ensure a specific focus for each session on including our babies and we set up more user friendly activities"

Effective focus on transitions to school

Seven responses mentioned transition to school, and most indicated significant changes had been implemented. For example: "More interactions with Primary School teachers, understanding their processes and what they are looking for when children start school – how can our programme support this transition"

Effective focus on transitions (into and within the service)

Five responses to focused on transitions into or within the service. For example, "Our transition policy has been reviewed and there have been many changes made to this as an outcome of the Professional Development we received. There is greater awareness from an administrative level through to primary caregiving responsibilities to ensure a successful transition. Most importantly we have recognised that an opportunity to formally meet with families during any stage of transition before and after i.e., home to nursery, nursery to preschool and preschool to school – is valued by our families/whānau.

Effective focus on social competence

Eight responses related to children's social competencies. Two focused on giving children the opportunity to resolve their own conflicts. Other comments suggested work in this focus has had an impact on children's interactions with each other and/or teachers; for example "Now having strategies to put in place in regard to supporting children's social competence has resulted in deeper thinking about the behaviour I am witnessing and how I can best support the child". Children's increased agency was noted by one: "The children appear to understand that they have choices and that they can have an effect on how and what they learn. There is more opportunity for children to have agency over their lives and learning."

CASE STUDIES

The chosen focus area(s) was not the sole criterion in selecting services for the case studies and so the selected services do not evenly cover the focus areas (see Table 4.9). Some services had completed their PD, some were in the second year but had changed focus, and some were working in two focus areas simultaneously.

Table 4.9: **Range of identified focus areas across the case study services**

	2011	2012
Parents and whānau engagement in children's learning		1
Effective teaching practices for Māori children		1
Culturally responsive and effective teaching practices for Pasifika children		
Effective educational leadership: culturally responsive learning contexts and systems	1	2
Effective focus on literacy	1	2
Effective focus on mathematics		1
Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers		1
Effective focus on transitions to school	1	
Effective focus on transitions (into and with the services)		1
Effective focus on social competence		3
Not specified		1

This discussion covers the questions of services engaging in multiple sources of PD, and of services choosing multiple foci for their PD, and concludes with examples of changes in teacher practices resulting from the PD across the rubric areas.

Services engaging in multiple sources of PD

There were two examples of services engaging in multiple sources of professional development. In one case it appeared to have contributed to the success of the contract work. In the other case, the result was less clear. A service with a focus on te reo Māori in the current programme was seen to have built on earlier PD journeys. The site evaluator wrote: "There were strong connections between the learning and experiences provided as a result of three PD programmes they mentioned to me — te reo Māori, Enviroschools and Reggio Emilia"; "My own view is that the combination of the three PD programmes … has contributed significantly to the way the teachers' growing knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to this PD focus is deeply integrated into their relationships with children and their families, their focus on holistic development and their provision of a physical environment that reflects beliefs and values promoted from all three perspectives."

However, another of the case study services had been involved in a range of professional development and teachers here appeared to merge and even confuse these in their discussions. These programmes included:

- Transition to school "for two years. But now there is not anymore because of the funding. It really worked well"

- "The other PD that we involved with, that's the *Incredible Years* looking at the social competence of children"

- "Self-review and the social competence of children" (current programme)

There were also references to a focus on numeracy, but this may have been part of the transition to school focus. Teachers' lack of clarity about the distinction between the programmes raises the question of whether providing an uncoordinated range of PD best serves the needs of services, teachers and children.

Services with multiple areas of focus

Several services chose multiple areas of focus within the current PD programme. Two combined literacy and numeracy. Another combined leadership with social competence because the goal for the PD was to develop one teacher's leadership skills and so enhance

the team's functioning; the focus on social competence provided a vehicle for that purpose. For these services having combined focus areas appeared to work well. However, another team – after having a very successful and focused first year of PD – opted to work on a variety of different areas that had been identified to them (e.g., self-review, self-competency, consistency in routines for infants and toddlers). The site evaluator wrote:

> My sense of change in this Centre's PD focus area and practices was that they have made progress in some aspects whilst others have been left completely. I was wholly impressed with what they had tackled and taken on in the last year however felt that if they had maybe focused on less as a team, they would have been able to enhance their practices, as well as support their teachers in increasing what they were doing.... However this year they appeared to want too much out of their PD and possibly were not supported as best as possible either.

These comments suggest the value of having a clear focus and vision for the PD work.

The focus areas

The following provide examples from the case studies and are intended to illustrate the range and variety of positive shifts that have been made in services as a result of engagement in PD.

Parents and whānau engagement in children's learning

Site evaluators asked both teachers and parents/whānau about their engagement in their children's learning. In many sites it was clear this was an area of on-going focus predating the PD. In others it was apparent significant shifts had occurred, sometimes as an indirect result of the central PD focus. For example, in a service with a focus on literacy and numeracy, the site evaluator recorded "The photo board, children's portfolios, shared breakfasts and morning teas and informal conversation appear to be effective practices for sharing children's learning with their parents in this setting". Threaded through almost every case study report were detailed examples of parent-teacher communication, of teachers engaging parents/whānau in their children's learning, and sometimes also in the programme:

> Parent one: We have parents' evenings – whanaungatanga – where we introduce ourselves with each other. In the past parents have been a bit shy but now they are coming out of their shells…The workshop was wonderful. [Two teachers] gave a workshop which parents found very great – what children are learning and what they like. It was a great turn out and parents took time out to listen to the workshop. Parents involvement has now changed they are more involved.

Effective teaching practices for Māori children

The site evaluator wrote:

> A comprehensive document trail has been collated by the centre of the professional development work completed and progress made. Although the centre has strong kaupapa Māori philosophy and practices the professional development work has supported deeper understandings and reflections of their centre and personal philosophies and practices. A teacher reported "The work has helped us to acknowledge being Māori and doing Māori things. These are understandings we had either suppressed in the past, or we didn't know but the work has helped us gain express them, it has empowered us to be Māori".

Vignette:

> As I sit to join a group of children on the mat a child sees me and approaches. She smiles widely and touches my arm warmly. A teacher notices this and praises her saying 'ka pai'. I respond by smiling and the child wanders off. The teacher then explains that she had reminded the children earlier in the morning about how to care for manuhiri and the fact that the centre had manuhiri (me) visiting that day. She reminded the children about making manuhiri feel welcome in the centre and the need for the centre to feel warm for manuhiri. The site evaluator noted: "The teachers reinforced cultural expectations around 'manaaki

ngā manuhiri' through reminding children about what is required to care for visitors and praising their efforts. This growing awareness was evidenced in the child initiating contact with me and the approaches of other children during the morning".

Effective educational leadership: culturally responsive learning contexts and systems

The site evaluator wrote:

> Portfolios contained entries which used Māori language quite extensively … Two group learning stories *Digging the grave* and *Cleansing* record how the children found a dead bird and buried it in the "urupa" (located among the flaxes in the outdoor area). A later story records how Baxter (the kindergarten's previous rabbit) died and was also buried in the urupa. This story records that later they unveiled a memorial stone which marks Baxter's grave. Also displayed in the same area are explanations of the importance of an urupa and definitions of tapu according to Māori world views. … From what I observed their bicultural practice is deeply integrated into the programme. The more I looked the more I saw. It wasn't superficial – it didn't necessarily 'hit you in the eye' but it was evident everywhere when you looked closely.

Effective focus on literacy

A teacher in an under-twos service identified the most important change in practice as:

> It's our articulation of what it is the children are doing and learning. I think that we provided great experiences and opportunities for them around literacy prior to this and had a reasonable understanding of it but it has way deepened it to be much more than we thought it was. And so it has made changes in our discussions with parents, and our learning stories and discussions with each other [are] on a much more professional level.

The teachers have also surveyed parents on their thoughts about literacy, and what happens in the home, created a wall display to show how they practise literacy within their programme, and made an information folder on literacy for parents.

Effective focus on mathematics

The site evaluator wrote: "The PD was very effective. The first impression I gained was an environment which was saturated with evidence of children's work on display and teaching resources – charts, equipment and artefacts supporting and enhancing children's developing skills." After reviewing children's portfolios the site evaluator wrote:

> The documentation in the portfolio's show a marked improvement, for example a Learning Story written in January 2012 describes the child's interest in counting , where she was noted counting dinosaurs and then the drums in the music corner and another checked showed learning stories becoming more focused on children's learning interests.

Other observations included:

> A group learning story recording a group of children working alongside a teacher at a counting activity using natural materials – pāua shells, polished stones, pipi shells. Children were posed questions - how many pāua shells? The second task was to translate the English terms into Samoan.

> A significant focus on numeracy at group time; for example a bean bag activity with each bag having a number 1-10. Children sorted the bean bags into order, by number, word and symbol (dot) displayed on each bag.

The site evaluator commented that the adult-driven approach and group-learning context are familiar to the children.

Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers

Adults in a mixed age service with a focus on their provision and programming for under twos reported a variety of outcomes. One adult talked about seeing the youngest children as

potential learners, and becoming more aware of learning opportunities for them. Another said: "There is more awareness of what the little ones can do, so if we set up an activity we will try to find a way that the little ones can be part of it, or at least can still have some experience of it." Several said they had gained "lots of neat practical ideas" from the three workshops, particularly from the workshop on schema. The facilitator's role modelling on the three sessions had made an impact; "she really got in there and played alongside the children, and found ways to support and extend them". In response to being asked what had been gained, the lead educator said: "Mainly, the energy it instilled in the adults and the learning that they gained. We were able to set up new stuff that gave new enthusiasm and wonderful sessions followed it." The site evaluator observed:

> Toddlers on session actively encouraged to participate in all activities provided. An area for younger children indoors set up attractively – a low couch, with colourful soft fabric on the floor. On it: a treasure basket, a basket with folded pieces of fabric, and a basket of soft toys.

Reviewing the learning stories on display and in a selection of the portfolios showed few learning stories for many of the children, no increase in learning stores focusing on the under 2s since the PD began, and no references to schema. The site evaluator noted: "The Under 2s learning stories –written before or after [the PD began] – show a depth of sensitivity and thoughtfulness about the learning of these younger children."

Effective focus on transitions to school

A focus on transition to school was documented exhaustively, and in ways which showed how the focus flowed over into other aspects of the educators' practices, programming and thinking. For example, the Big Kids Friday session is designed to "benefit and support our older children in their learning and development, socialisation and transition to school" and school visits are one of the regular activities. Outcomes for children were identified:

> The children know that there are schools now. …. We also did a few events when we invited other [services] and part of that was a way of showing children you can be around other people and those rules still apply – you welcome them, you look after them, they may not know where things are – you know that whole nurturing thing; that you are not an isolated group of people. It is not directly part of our transitioning but I think that it supports that.

All adults present (apart from two new parents) were keen to share how the PD had impacted on them, and all appeared to see themselves as active contributors to sessions, and to subsequent discussions about children's learning. One shared:

> Through our Big Kids Friday session we have had two school visits which have been so insightful and beneficial both for my daughter and myself. …Being able to observe my daughter's reaction to these visits – seeing how comfortable she was in the school environment, being able to listen, to interact with others – all skills that she is encouraged to do and build on at [service]. And then coming back … after these visits, being able to talk with the children and talk with my own daughter at home about the visit, how she feels about one day going to school, helping to make her feel safe in her own mind.

Adults acknowledged the focus on transitions went far wider than transitions to school and recent learning stories showed sensitivity to the wider question of transitions – into the service, onto the Big Kids session and/or the visits to schools.

A workshop on emotional language was part of the PD programme; this was said to have had "the greatest immediate impact". A parent (who had not attended the workshop) talked about the impact on her own practices. "I have been changing my language at home to use a wider range of less loaded language describing my own emotions". She also said: "My husband comes with the boys once a week. He didn't attend any of the sessions but he's picked up new knowledge and skills from the people who did." She also reported "I have heard my 4 year old use more emotional language".

Effective focus on transitions (into and within a service)

Example:

> Vignette 1: "Each teacher is rostered on to be with the young children and do nappies one day each week. This teacher is required to do all the nappies for that day and then to put those younger children to bed in the afternoons. The teaching team decided on this approach as they felt that they wanted more consistency in the care routines throughout the day and by having one person on each day this consistency and assurance for children could be maintained."

The site evaluator commented:

> The teachers have developed this strong routine which they are all comfortable with as a way to combat children's anxiety and stress in dealing with different teachers throughout the day. It can reassure children in knowing who is going to look after them that day in those care moments as well as ensuring some very quality interactions can occur.

Effective focus on social competence

In a service with a focus on social competence, a teacher reported her practice had become more credit based with children and focusing on positive guidance:

> Her behaviour when she came here … was about not participating in mat time or attending group time. From attending the PD I gained a lot of …strategies so we [could] help her along. By attending mat time we praise her, sometimes we make awards and the mum and Nana from home, they report these strategies they are using at home and they really work.

Excerpts taken from a random selection of portfolio books showed recent learning stories which documented children's developing social competence. For example: "L. shows her friend how to walk along the foam climber", "K adapting well to her new environment and becoming increasingly confident to choose her own play activities independently", "M with her friends on the trampoline and interacting and taking turns with the group when building the tower (of blocks)". The site evaluator commented on the marked improvement in the quality of the narratives written in the last 12 months.

Evaluation question 3: How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In contrast to the many qualitative examples of change in teacher practices in PD provider reports, there are fewer examples of teachers focusing on the impact of their practices on children's learning. The lack of emphasis on children's learning may be because, as one provider noted, teachers still tend to judge the success of their PD on the changes they make to their practices.

There are a few descriptions of immediate quick changes teachers reported making in response to PD sparked by attending a cluster meeting or seminar, as the result of an initial data-gathering visit, or from watching video of their practices. For example, teachers reported, after attending a cluster meeting, that they became "acutely aware" of the messages they might be conveying to children and families with the language they used.

Among reported comments from teachers reviewing their longer-term progress, there are a few that indicate greater awareness of the impact of practices on learning outcomes for children. For example:

- Centres report that the self-review process created an opportunity to move beyond the daily management of the centre, to reflect and discuss children's learning. [This] … has put children's strengths and interests and the adult's response to these in the foreground of their daily practice.

Providers include examples which indicate the way enhanced teachers' practices are influencing the experience of children in their service. For example:

- Children now serving themselves at mealtimes encouraging self-help skills and responsibility

- Children have more choices and take responsibility as active participants during routines

- Children are experiencing opportunities to discuss, theorise and experiment with mathematical and literacy concepts. They are using a wider range of literacy and mathematical vocabulary to describe their explorations

- Children developing skills for managing their own conflict situations

- The children know and understand what they are singing [in te reo Māori].

Documentation of learning was a focus for many providers in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact of their practices on children's learning. Providers wrote of "supporting adults to use documentation effectively to build a picture of each child as a competent and confident learner" and of supporting them "to develop their theoretical knowledge to recognise and articulate the depth of children's learning, along with skill in tracking the complexity and continuity of children's dispositions and working theories". There are also examples suggesting the many improvements many teachers have/are making:

- Documentation reflecting "'the child as a 'learner' and connections over time are becoming evident"

  - Teachers becoming "more confident and reflective writers of learning stories"

  - Learning stories that "empower and drive the planning".

One provider found the use of video data of teacher and centre practices was invaluable in stimulating discussions on teaching responses and strategies to most effectively support the child.

Interestingly, references to teachers' increased awareness of the impact of their practices on children were particularly prevalent in providers' discussions of the Social competence focus area (as discussed earlier in this chapter in relation to Question 2).

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

PD provider interviews underlined the complexities of their in-depth PD work with services. While not all providers used the phrase 'learning outcomes', it was evident from the interviews that most were intent on keeping a strong focus on improving children's learning, but there were often indications this was recognized as being 'work in progress' with many services.

Some providers openly acknowledged this had required a mind shift for facilitators: "A lot of the work too has been around the facilitators changing their habits for themselves if you like and always keeping children's learning outcomes in their minds." One reported Lyn Wright's[1] distinction "between potential outcomes for children and actual outcomes for children" had been valuable in working with facilitators as well as services: "That was a good distinction I think, resonated for us".

Providers described keeping the focus on learning outcomes for children to the forefront in their work with services. One described focusing on outcomes from the beginning, saying "So that's a shift instead of just focusing on what does it mean for teacher practice, what's going to change here. Getting teachers to think about what change will mean for children's learning". The broader structure of the PD contract supported a focus on children's learning:

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[1] Wright, L. (2012) cited in a PD Provider Telephone Interview.

> The milestones, the templates etc. have been quite helpful in directing our thinking around that and shifting some of our practices in that way too and also the self-review processes are in place and the indicators …. The whole process is having a strong emphasis on collecting evidence, using evidence to inform practice and the evidence is around children's learning.

This focus had flowed through into providers' PD programmes:

> I guess the ways that the programme itself is contributing to improving children's learning outcomes has been to focus on outcomes at the beginning, when you work with teachers, so to focus teachers on thinking about outcomes for children at the time they might be doing the rubric process or the self-review process, so when you're talking about, in self-review, selecting those indicators 'what does it really look like', it's a vision, focusing attention on, so 'what would it look like for children, what does this mean in terms of children's learning?'.

There were also references to keeping children's learning to the forefront of every visit – for example, using the Ministry's own prompts with services: "we always come back to what the Ministry says too. 'What are their outcomes for children and how do you know?'" Another said:

> One of the things that we have or I have stressed with facilitators is every time you go in the centre you talk about what you did last time and what's changed for children in terms of outcomes, what's changed for teacher practice … At the beginning I don't think that we, as a team, were doing that strongly enough.

The facilitators' challenge has been to get teachers to make a similar change and comments by providers highlighted this was an on-going journey for many teachers: "And it is an ability. Not all teachers have the ability to do it right away … with being able to connect, if I do this, this is the outcome for children". One provider noted:

> I think teachers can talk about their practice and they can recognise change in practice, they know they're doing things differently but I wonder sometimes whether they are a little bit shy or reserved or reluctant to attribute child outcomes to their change in practice, because assessment it's quite a slippery thing and putting your mark in the sand and saying, "actually, I made a difference to that child's learning" is a big thing.

Most providers described approaches used to focus teachers on improving learning outcomes for children although two talked more in terms of successes achieved. Establishing a culture of reflective practice was recognised by most providers as the starting place. Two providers described using *Kei tua o te pae*'s notice, recognise and respond cycle: "it's definitely impacting on children because their learning is getting extended, it's getting challenged, teachers are thinking deeper". Teachers were also supported to see changes occurring for children through strategies such as child studies:

> And we've asked teachers, when we've gone in and got the appraisal … or even the emotional awareness or whatever we've done, we've been really insistent that they track it through outcomes for at least one child … because if it's happening for one child, they can be fairly confident that other children are also benefiting from those shifts in their practice. So I think we've really upped the pressure on those sorts of accountabilities.

Providers assisted services to set short- and long-term action plans: "Some of them have never set action plans or goals before and so they don't even know how to evaluate their programmes or their own teaching because they haven't set those kinds of goals before." Providers also noted that they needed to support teachers to evaluate their progress:

> A lot of centres haven't been doing good evaluation. And I've been talking with them about, "well actually, you can't evaluate if you haven't got a starting point" and just actually setting those baselines for what they're doing and finding out what children actually know at the beginning rather than presuming it and then when they evaluate, they've actually got something that they can evaluate against.

Not surprisingly, providers report finding teachers focusing on changes in their practices rather than on children's learning outcomes at times. One provider described services' final presentations (in the first round of the national Leadership PD programme):

> Even though the facilitators had worked really hard to get them to think about outcomes for children when they presented, it was very much about their journey of change not the impact it had on children and that was one of the things we were disappointed about in the end really and are trying to rectify.

Two providers offered thoughts on why teachers might find it hard to identify learning outcomes for children:

> I think teachers are only just starting to track and monitor effectively, how what they're doing is impacting on outcomes for children and then using that as an evaluative [tool], so I don't think we're at that point yet where teachers could honestly say, well I could honestly report to you that I think that's happening. It may be happening and we're not aware of it yet.

> It seems quite hard for teachers to sometimes talk about shifts for children. And I puzzled over that because one would expect that teachers would, that would be their strength to talk about that because that's what their job is. …But what I think … is if things aren't going too well in your centre and you haven't got the buy in of parents and you haven't got a cohesive team and you're not talking about stuff it's hard for you to move to that next space. …When you get good solid PD … it allows you to focus on who you are as a team and allows leadership to blossom and you get the right resources because you know how to get them, suddenly the next step is to be able to really focus on the children.

But there was also evidence of change. One provider described that although teachers had been reluctant to talk about evidence-based practice, she believed the focus on evaluation was leading to change. Another provider working with a cluster focused on planning reported teachers are "actually thinking about children first and they're actually identifying meaningful learning for children rather than setting up curriculum areas and letting the children have a free for all, they're actually thinking about it and reflecting about what children – and how to extend on that".

Examples of improved teacher practices improving children's learning outcomes

Providers were asked for specific examples of how their programme has 'improved teacher practices in order to improve children's learning outcomes?' No provider referred to shifts in the rubrics in describing examples of success, but they did give a wide range of examples, both generic and specific. The following provide an indication of the variety of examples offered. (See the discussion of Question 2 earlier in this chapter for further examples in relation to the focus areas):

> Here's [teacher name] talking. 'I see a clear picture of who I am now as a teacher, the learning that's inside that drives me to be determined to get deep into the children's learning and to find out more about each child'. Fabulous shift, so not surface, providing a programme that children just have access to on the table top but deeply following children's interest in finding out about their lives and exploring it further.

> So what happens is that having a small focus and memorising it over the 28 days everybody becomes an expert. The children learn all of those things; they have really good pronunciation [of te reo Māori]. … The teachers become competent and that is transferred to the children and the children have now, one of the success stories is that they are the teachers.

The question of how PD providers gather evidence and/or evaluate the success of their programmes in focusing teachers on children's learning outcomes was raised. Comments indicated having facilitators present on session made it easier to gather evidence of change: "The centre based observations by facilitators have been the eyes in the centre". When this was not part of the PD programme providers were finding it more challenging. For example, it was difficult to gather evidence when services wanted the facilitator to just "pop in", or when the facilitator was dependent on the group reporting back "because sometimes they don't give

themselves anywhere near enough credit". One provider was also considering how they might gather evidence from children.

In the online survey services rated the effectiveness of their PD programme in six areas, and assessed their effectiveness as a service both before their PD, and now. In a later question, services ranked their overall satisfaction with the PD programme, particularly in relation to 'Making a difference to children's learning'. This section draws on the relevant data from those two sections.

Quantitative evidence

Overall, the responses to the survey indicate very high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the PD programme. Table 4.10, which summarises services' assessment of their overall satisfaction with the PD programme in relation to making a difference to children's learning, shows that 96% (N=159) were very satisfied or satisfied.

Table 4.10: Services' overall level of satisfaction with the PD programme in relation to making a difference to children's learning

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Making a difference to children's learning	95 (57%)	64 (39%)	5 (3%)	2 (1.5%)	166

Analysis by PD programme group showed the percentage who indicated 'Very satisfied' were:

- 55% of services in programme one who responded to this question
- 66% of services in programme one plus programme two and/or three
- 55% of services in programme two and/or three.

Not surprisingly the proportion of those 'Very satisfied' rose with the length of their involvement in the PD programme – from one-third of those who had just started to two-thirds for those who were close to finishing, who had finished, or had begun a second phase of PD.

Investigating the seven services who indicated they were 'Very dissatisfied' or 'Dissatisfied' in relation to making a difference to children's learning showed five of the seven were services enrolled only in Programme 1. Two of the seven were services just starting their PD, two were in the middle of their programme, and three were services who were close to finishing, had finished, or had begun a second round of PD.

Services' assessment of the effectiveness of the PD programme (see Table 4.11) provides insight into the ways in which services consider the PD programme has had an impact on their teaching practices, and ultimately on improving learning outcomes for children. Most services consider the PD programme to have been effective (either 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective') in those areas that most directly relate to improving learning outcomes for children:

- To how you think about your teaching during interactions with children (96%)
- To a team focus on teaching and learning (91%)
- For the children in your service (94%)

Table 4.11: Services' assessment of the effectiveness of the PD programme in making a difference in relation to factors relevant to making a difference for children's learning

	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not very effective	Ineffective	Unsure	Total
To how you think about your teaching during your interactions with children	117 (59.4%)	72 (36.5%)	5 (2.4%)	2 (1%)	1 (0.5%)	197
To a team focus on teaching and learning	106 (54.4%)	72 (36.9%)	11 (5.6%)	2 (1%)	4 (2.1%)	195
For the children in your service	112 (57.4%)	71 (36.4%)	9 (4.6%)	2 (1%)	1 (0.5%)	195

Analysis by programme showed that more respondents in the group programme one plus programme two and/or three identified their PD programme as 'Very effective' than those in either of the other two PD programme groups. Analysis by length of involvement in the PD programme showed that longer involvement was associated with increased rating of its effectiveness for all three areas. More than 60% of services who were close to finishing, had finished, or had begun a second round of PD reported their PD programme/s were very effective in all three areas.

Those few respondents who reported their PD programme to have been 'Not very effective' or 'Ineffective' came from all PD programmes, and from all stages of their programme.

Table 4.12 demonstrates the shifts in effectiveness services assessed they had made as a result of their PD programme in those two aspects most relevant to teachers' awareness of the impact of their practices on learning outcomes for children. (Services were not asked to rate their effectiveness 'for the children in your service'.)

Table 4.12: Services' assessment of their effectiveness before and as a result of engagement in their PD programme

	Percentage ranking Very Effective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Very Effective now as a result of the PD programme
Your thinking about your teaching during interactions with children	12%	64%
Team discussions which focus on teaching and learning	18%	65%
	Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective now as a result of the PD programme
Your thinking about your teaching during interactions with children	22%	2%
Team discussions which focus on teaching and learning	36%	3%

Important here is the high proportion of services that retrospectively recognised their practices in these two areas were either 'Not very effective' or 'Ineffective' before they undertook the PD. In particular, analysis shows consistently just over one-third of services identified a lack of effectiveness in the team's focus on teaching and learning. Analyses by PD programme, and by progress through the PD programme/s show across all groups the range of services giving themselves a 'Not very effective' or 'Ineffective' pre-PD rating for 'A team focus on teaching and learning' ranged between 32% and 40%. A slighter lower proportion (16% to 32%) rated themselves as either 'Not very effective' or 'Ineffective' before PD for 'How you think about your teaching during interactions with children'. These retrospective ratings as "Ineffective' or 'Not very effective' may reflect a more realistic assessment of their earlier practices as a result of the understandings they have gained through engagement in their PD.

A second noteworthy feature relates to services' views on of the progress they have made. Firstly, the fact that nearly two-thirds of services now consider that they are 'Very effective' in these two aspects of their practice, is evidence of the overall effectiveness of the PD programmes. Analysis by PD programme showed that, regardless of programme, the majority of services considered they were 'Highly effective' in both areas following the PD. Those enrolled in programme one plus either programme two and/or three were most likely to give themselves a post-PD rating of 'Highly effective' and those in programme two and/or three were least likely to give themselves this rating.

Thirdly, analysis by progress through the PD programme reaffirms the importance of on-going PD. The percentage of services ranking themselves as 'Very effective' on those two aspects post-PD increased with their length of engagement in the PD programme. The fact that only around two-thirds of services overall now rank themselves as 'Very effective' on these two dimensions, and that one-third of services therefore recognise they are not yet in this category may be a further indication of enhanced awareness of what constitutes 'Highly effective' practices. These figures may also signal services' post-PD self-assessments are more realistic than some of the initial rubric assessments (For further discussion of services' rubric ratings see Chapter 8).

Qualitative evidence

Responses to the survey questions asking for examples of changed practices provide some insight into the kind of qualitative changes that have occurred. Despite the high levels of satisfaction with the effectiveness of the programme in making a difference for children in the service (see Table 4.10 above), a focus on children's learning outcomes was not a strong theme in the written responses. Perhaps because the wording of the survey question ('Please give an example of how your practices in your focus area(s) have changed as a result of your engagement in your PD programme') did not direct respondents to focus on children's learning, only 23 of the 170 responses mention positive outcomes for children's learning. Most of those 23 responses related to changes in the focus area(s), and were discussed in Question 2 earlier in this chapter. Whilst a number of statements highlighted children's learning in a general way, 16 responses related to changes in assessment processes and practices (e.g., writing more in-depth learning stories, changing the planning process to focus on children's interests) indicating a stronger focus on children's learning. (For further discussion of these responses see the section earlier in this chapter on Pedagogical Leadership, Evaluation Question 2).

Many of the other responses focused on changes in teacher practices and teacher reflectiveness that would impact positively on children's learning. For example: "Reflective practices help to look at children's perspective, their ideas and input, and flow with their ideas more than teacher directive". A few responses indicate the link between teacher practices and children's learning that respondents are recognising. For example: "Our teaching discussions are far more beneficial and focus on teaching and learning more and more as we go along".

Only a handful of the responses highlighted children's 'actual learning' rather than 'potential learning' (Wright, 2012). For example:

- The children are using more te reo and it is natural and not forced

- We are now planning for a child's transition to school more effectively and inclusively with the child identifying learning goals and discussing school readiness

- Interactions between teachers and children, and children and children are more in depth and sustained

- Use of te reo has increased across the board so much so that our tamariki are now the teachers, leaders and experts

- We have allowed children to solve their own social conflicts without staff solving the conflicts for them. Giving children the opportunity to learn, address and reflect on their conflicts and being able to solve through positive strategies that prevents them from what is unacceptable behaviour.

CASE STUDIES

The case study data provide further qualitative evidence of shifts in teacher practices which will contribute to improved learning outcomes for children. This was apparent for all but two of the case study sites: in one there was no opportunity to gather that data, and in the second it was apparent that the PD programme had surfaced such significant issues within a dysfunctional team that it was assessed to be inappropriate to continue the visit.

What did site evaluators' reports reveal for the remaining 14 case study sites? Firstly, the wide range of examples observed by site evaluators or reported by teachers showed teachers were talking about children's learning and improved outcomes:

> The teacher claimed that children have become more aware of their role in learning and entering play and that teachers will not answer or solve their problems for them. It has helped them to become more independent and thus develop stronger relationships with their peers as they work more for what they want.

Secondly, the reports also contained episodes observed during the visit which provide vignettes of how teachers were supporting children's learning in a variety of ways (for further examples, see Question 2 earlier in this chapter):

> A child's mother came with a learning story written at home which focused on her daughter's interest in letters and numbers, and led to an animated discussion between her and the team leader over how they could support this interest on this session. Later in the session I saw that one of the tables had been set up with trays of paint, paper and letter stamps. A third adult was working with the girl at the table, supporting her in finding the letters in her name and printing them, and then in locating her name on the family pockets on the wall behind her. The child then requested that the adult write the names of her mother, her father, and went on until they had listed all the people and animals in her family. The adult used the process to build on her interest in letters, e.g. "Gosh you've got a lot of 'm's in your family – look how many there are in 'Mummy'. Can you count them?" and "That starts with a 'p' – can you find a 'p'?" etc.

Thirdly, site evaluators were asked 'In what you have observed are teachers focusing on the impact of their practice on learning outcomes for children' and to comment on and rate services. Their comments showed that, across all the sites where this process was completed, their assessment of the effectiveness of teachers' practices in improving learning outcomes for children ranged between 'Emerging' to 'Extremely well'. While such assessments are only indicative, their comments provide some insight into the practices observed:

- An example of a service where practices were assessed as 'Emerging': "Teachers work alongside children, extending their learning interests, in a range of ways. They are particularly skilled at reinforcing the special character of this setting, i.e. the culture and

language…. Children are becoming competent in ---- language. They also demonstrate skill in emerging numeracy and literacy skills."

- An example of a service where practices were assessed as 'Well': "Teachers are able to instigate and extend on children's learning in a very natural and unstructured way. There were numerous examples of teachers' abilities to improve learning outcomes for children"

- An example of a service where practices were assessed as 'Extremely well':

  - The wall of learning stories for all children for the term was clearly a working space. There were sticky notes attached, as adults added follow-up comments, to many of the story/stories displayed for each child. … In the end-of-session discussion for the team on duty that day, the focus was on identifying learning during the session, considering how effectively it had been supported, and identifying how it might be followed up the next day. They discussed writing a learning story to record the printing/writing episode.

The site evaluator's report for one case study site indicated particular areas of concern in relation to the documentation of children's learning. "Documentation and learning stories was something that was identified in their most recent ERO visit (August 2012) as in need of improvement". The site evaluator's own comments on the learning documentation included:

> There were a lot of group stories, which never isolated any particular learning or child's spoken word or achievement; they just had images with a basic description and a lot of praise. The stories were positive and did show fun moments, however only basic learning was identified and only on the odd occasion were future steps suggested. The profiles were filled with images; however the frequency between entries was very widely spaced…. The books are beautifully decorated on the front and appealing to get hold of however they are very high up and strapped to a shelf with cords making it inaccessible for children unless they asked."

However, the site evaluator's observations indicated that the documentation of children's learning may not be indicative of teachers' practices:

> The teachers have strong intentionality in what they do with children; their activities are fun, interesting and honour the many different interests or learning outcomes that they are working through at the time. … The reflection and documentation of the children's learning and steps forward is not overtly obvious … however their processes seem to occur in their mind as they are continually challenging the children. …. The children are happy in this space, and are thirsty for knowledge; learning lots alongside their just as interested teachers.

Finally, site evaluators' reports contained some indications of four complexities teachers may be grappling with in identifying and defining learning. First, some descriptions appear to focus more on the potential for learning to occur, than on observed moments or episodes of learning:

> A centre owner reports she has "relaxed the structure of the Centre in the over-two area, ensuring that children have more freedom and are not rushed to pack up and move to the next section of the day. This has meant a greater learning opportunity for children in that they are able to explore more and sit back and go at their own pace which has enhanced their confidence in what they are doing. I see that they are learning, their confidence, and the way that they interact with the staff as well and how they are capable to do things by themselves you know. The choices we give to them they can set their own goals rather than depend on us. We decide what we need to support their interests but they cover it in their own way because our way is not their way. And we got feedback from parents as well how they notice (their progress) from home as well.

Second, there is the question of how deeply teachers are engaging in and supporting learning? A site evaluator commented of one setting:

> There appear to be a lot of activities planned that aim to improve learning outcomes for children. I am unsure however whether the intentions of these activities are being fully realised.

Third, there is the question of what constitutes learning beyond the very familiar (e.g., letters and numbers) and the easily observed (e.g., physical skills) and, fourth, the complexity around assessing what constitutes appropriate learning/teaching in a particular context – and who should decide.

> The teacher uses the Kei a Wai board game shapes to discuss with the children – she uses the [language] terms. The children recite these terms, rote fashion. They then look at the days of the week, reciting these in [language], then explore a colour chart once again learning the [language] names. They then begin counting from 1-10. The children show recognition of shapes, symbols and numbers. They then sing the days of the week, followed by a Māori days of the week song AEIOU. Children then recite the alphabet; children then identify a colour that they are wearing before they leave the mat to wash hands for morning tea.

Evaluation question 4: How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Provider reports indicate many services responded positively to the opportunities for reflection that engaging in PD brought. Even early in the PD contracts, facilitators were reporting a change in teacher thoughtfulness, but the most recent milestones contain more detailed examples. Often these were in relation to self-review and/or inquiry processes initiated as part of the PD programme, for example:

> Centres reported that the self-review process created an opportunity to move beyond the daily management of the centre, to reflect and discuss children's learning. Focusing on teaching and learning through the self-review process has put children's strengths and interests and the adult's response to these in the foreground of their daily practice.

At times it is clear teacher reflectiveness extends beyond the particular focus area of self-review/inquiry:

> We are more open to question ourselves and each other about the purpose behind what we are doing and reflect on what our learning outcomes for children are. This makes our practice more thoughtful and intentional.

Enablers

Analysis of provider milestone reports reveal four key enablers that support teachers to develop reflective and on-going improvement practices. First, where PD programmes are strongly based on self-review, inquiry, action research and/or appreciative inquiry services are more likely to report adopting reflective practices. For some PD providers a focus on review and reflection appeared to have been less central to phase one, perhaps reflecting the needs of the services with which they were engaging, or the overall structure of the 3-year PD plan. There are sparse references to teacher reflectiveness through the documentation from those providers.

Second, the facilitator's role often appears crucial. For example, one milestone report noted:

> The process of rating the team against the [rubrics] criteria and providing evidence in practice of the rating 'in action' have resulted in some deep reflection. Facilitators probe for deeper reflection, asking if it is representative of "all children and families, all the time".

Their role was particularly important as they supported centres through a review/inquiry process. In some programmes it is clear they took an intensive role in coaching teachers in the processes of inquiry and self-review.

Third, the presence of a leader in the centre who is committed to an inquiry process and/or to leading learning in the team is important. Such leadership can extend beyond just positional leaders. In services where reviews/ inquiries had traditionally been the responsibility of management, engaging the whole team in taking responsibility for the process required facilitator time and input.

Fourth, using video-recordings of teacher practices was identified as a catalyst for reflection and change. This included video filmed by the facilitator as part of the initial assessment together with services adopting video as a tool for analysing teaching pedagogy.

Barriers

Milestone reports suggest there are a number of circumstances that contribute to services being slower in strengthening their reflective practices. In addition to services and/or teachers being unfamiliar with the concept of reflective practice or issues around leadership, reports note challenges when teachers adopt 'best practices' from other services, but without developing their own theoretical understandings to underpin these practices.

Some barriers relate specifically to services' difficulties with the inquiry/review process, including being unfamiliar with the concept or processes of self-review or being daunted by the task of conducting one. More specifically, reports note some services struggled with *Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua* and facilitators needed to make both the document and the process accessible. Other services had no existing systems for documenting their self-review or lacked understanding of the importance of documenting significant influences on changes in their practice. Finally, some services were unfamiliar with evaluation processes or with the connections between planning, assessment, evaluation and the philosophy of the centre.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

Provider interviews included two questions asking how they had supported services to strengthen their own processes for on-going reflection as a result of the PD:

- In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract supported teachers' on-going reflection and improvement of their practices?

- What particular success and/or challenges have you faced in supporting teachers' reflection and improvement of their practices?

This discussion is structured around responses to those questions.

In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract supported teachers' on-going reflection and improvement of their practices?

It was evident that providers used a wide variety of process and strategies to support teachers' on-going reflection and improvement of their practices, particularly in relation to self-review processes. Five key themes emerged: use of self-review processes; developing action plans; using documentation to support reflection; coaching; and, use of ICT to support reflection.

Self-review processes

Self-review processes were extensively used by the provider. Providers modelled *Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua* self-review processes so that services could see it in action if they were not familiar with it:

> See how it works and then put it in practice, you know going forwards in terms of being a sustainable model for them to work with in the future. So encouraging reflective practice all around in terms of more conversations and thinking about what's happening for children in terms of their sessions and what they are providing and how they are working with children and what the children are gaining from the experiences they provide. So I think definitely there's been a significant shift in competence around reflective practice and self-review as a process. I think it's an on-going thing that we need to always be working with because we

do have different parents joining [name of service] all the time so therefore we always do need to be educating about these ways of working so I think it's, you can never tick it off and say, "it's done. That centre's got self-review sussed". You know you are always needing to encourage reflective practice in multiple ways.

This provider went on to emphasise the importance of valuing what the service already had, who they were and what they had already done before their PD started:

You know if you don't go in there with a positivity and valuing what it is they do, even if their current practices are not quite where we would like to see them, you definitely have to go in there with "what's working well here, what are your strengths, what are the things you are doing really well, what are you proud of, what are your achievements?" and then you go forward from there.

Another provider used an appreciative inquiry approach to begin the self-review process:

I think one of the first things that we started with as a sort of philosophical to the programme which also was an overarching framework was an appreciative enquiry model which is a strength based approach. So we went into centres asking centres the reflective questions that that process generates to reflect on their own understanding on being responsive to different cultures and valuing identities and languages that are coming through. I think that was a quite powerful process because not only was it powerful in terms of the centres being able to start from a position of strength and confidence but also an opportunity for centres to begin to grow critical of how they engage with different cultures and languages coming in. So I think that was our first approach to that.

The second approach, almost the second layer to it, was the self-review process and we used that to actually then drill down on bits that stuck out that the centres themselves identified that they didn't do quite as well. So we had the opportunity then to gather data around that from their own practice and policies and that gave us the sort of food for more conversation and more discussion around, "so what is, how do we impact this? What does this mean?" And then go onto have an action plan about "what would you like to change, what would you like to do instead?" So I think those two approaches of appreciating what works right now but also being able to build a critical eye within it.

Providers report that as a consequence of carrying out self-reviews that teachers had become much more reflective about what they were doing. Working as a team and actually having to document practice had been very positive, particularly when providers had asked services for indicator ratings to support their views. Providers felt that use of self-review indicators helped teachers to be more critical and reflective of their practice, both individually and as a team.

Action plans

Another provider identified that action plans were probably one of their most powerful tools. Each programme had an action plan and in their second phase services were "a little bit more up and good to go". Often centres had an enquiry action plan with each individual teacher then having their own:

That whole team thing ... and that's working quite well for that reflection because they're having to go off and to do their own research that's individual and collective at the same time. So it creates a positive pressure which probably has been one of the philosophical things in our project … we want them to be under pressure but not so far out that they freak out, the old flow channel sort of thing. So probably that's the on-going reflection.

Another provider discussed the importance of stressing to services from the beginning of their action research that when they finished there would be another question that they would want to engage with the next year. This gave services the message that self-review processes were on-going. A different provider pointed out that the action plan was something that the service owned:

That's a living, breathing kind of document that can change. So that's also part of that reflection. We found the rubric, well I found the rubric, to be quite good for that especially initially. It's going through the rubric with them and I think we need to go through that with

them, has helped them to self-identify the areas they're not feeling strong or confident in and that then informs their action plan and their focus.

Using documentation to support reflection

Providers used documentation in several ways to support teachers to engage in reflection on their practices. Sharing learning stories with each other and involving other team members in writing these created opportunities for discussion and collective reflection:

> If someone makes a comment about somebody else's learning story, handing that story to the person who's made the comment to write that down on the back, so there's on-going collegial discussion, evidence of that, without it being a big deal, without necessarily having to have it typewritten, just in the moment writing it down. Writing learning stories for each other, because if they see a teacher having a fabulous moment with a child or not a moment but a series of connectiveness going on, they can say about how stunning that relationship is, whereas the teacher can't say that, can't say I'm fabulous, but another person can say, what a fabulous relationship...So the whole kind of uplifting feel, it's very powerful.

Encouraging services to engage in written reflections that could then be shared with others in order to clarify and developed shared understandings was noted by another provider:

> Getting them to just start reflecting, like some teams they just have never reflected and maybe they're done a little bit in their training but sometimes they've not even done that so just start with getting them to do things like team reflections and just to give them that confidence about taking that on....I read a reflection from a particular centre and she was just sharing back how the information that she had got from the licensing person was different to what I was sharing. So by being able to read that reflection....I was able to clarify the points that she was confused about so that she actually saw we were both actually coming from the same place. But I said, if you hadn't done that reflection then nobody can take that, what you're pondering and clarify it. So just giving them examples like that how it's useful within their own teams.

Reflective journals were encouraged by some providers:

> Another reason that they have journals is because our very last contact for the year will be seminars so they are going to present their journey with [us] so they keep that information. Not all centres are comfortable with that and we don't force them into participating but we do invite them to come along to listen to what's happening.

The use of written reports after each PD visit by facilitators meant at their next visit, facilitators could "go over that with the team or the leader, whoever we're responsible for visiting. And so they've got that to reflect on as well".

Finally, one provider reported that they made use of relevant readings and tasks with reflection woven into them, "so it's not about just giving them the literature but actually asking them in a workshop situation to pull out three key messages that they could action in their services and things like that". Another provider stated:

> Sometimes I will still keep sending readings through with reflective questions to go with it, even though I've finished with teams and it just keeps in touch with them and keeps that reflective practice in the highlight.

Coaching

Providers described multiple examples of how they coached individual teachers and teams to be able to carry out aspects of their self-review and inquiry processes. Often this related to services being able to provide evidence and "where there are problems, we've coached them through facilitative interviewing. We probably do a lot of that". In addition to such coaching, it was evident from the interviews that many providers felt they were more available to teachers than in previous contracts, including using chats on Facebook, texting, emailing and phone calls.

Using ICT to support reflection

Providers are using a range of ICTs to support services to engage in reflection and on-going improvement, including preparing clips explaining aspects of effective teacher practices that were uploaded to YouTube. These clips meant that the teachers could go back and re-engage with the clips whenever they needed to.

One provider commented that her facilitators increasingly used video to get people to reflect on their practice and found it to be a powerful tool. In the past she would have given people the option of using video:

> I'm giving them less of an option now, saying this is the way we do this, so I want you to do a 3 minute video or I'll come in and do some videoing or whatever. And every time I've done that kind of thing, people have been amazed at how powerful it is because of the chance to reflect.

Services were guided through ethical processes for the use of such video recordings. For example, facilitators coached leaders about the use of ethical practices and they were then responsible for ensuring ethical protocols were adhered to by the team.

Another provider used YouTube for meeting preparations, which only their contract services had access to. Video clips and notes were uploaded so that teachers could watch the YouTube clips and prepare before they came to meetings. Issues with internet access for some rural services were acknowledged, although teachers without internet access at home were told to "get it". This provider noted that in one area where internet was available two centres had chosen not to connect: "They could have it but they don't and to me that's power and control and they are both private centres". Where internet connections were a problem this provider met with teachers where there was free access:

> We have our meetings in McDonald's so we get free Wi-Fi. On Wednesday I was at McDonald's ....with 12 teachers and we all had the iPads out and we were playing, iPad playgroup. So we make do.

Providers' meetings with teams often incorporated the use of photographs and video-recordings of teachers' practices that the facilitator had gathered during in-centre visits as the basis for discussions. This approach helped address a key issue, that of getting services to provide evidence of their practice:

> Sometimes it's a time issue and sometimes it's a motivation issue, just getting them into that habit of doing that from just small things that they are setting… themselves.

Successes and/or challenges faced in supporting teachers' reflection and improvement of their practices

Providers identified particular successes and challenges they experienced in terms of supporting teachers' reflection and focus on improving their practice.

Successes

A range of enablers that supported services to engage in on-going reflection and improvement of practices were identified by providers including the inherent flexibility of self-review processes. As one provider stated:

> No matter what topic you pick using that model brings the sense of ownership to the group. The ownership of the professional development then sits with the group within the centre, not with us. And that I think has been a really positive thing that we found has [been] getting self-review as our model in every programme.

A facilitator from this provider's team commented that when working with any of the focus areas, providing services with a framework to guide their thinking and reflection was helpful. She explained that:

In social competency, we use a framework that looks at setting the environment up in a certain way. We found that those kinds of frameworks are very helpful for people and that that would also support sustainability… to ensure that the centres have something to work with in the future.

Another provider reported successes when using Bevan-Brown's (2003) bi-cultural self-review document as part of services' self-review documentation. For another provider the involvement of the whole team, rather than just management, in self-review contributed to success. Working together with both management and staff enabled the service to brainstorm off each other. She went on to say:

Just celebrating the success with a team, when you sit there and you say to them, "tell me what you do really well" and they can articulate some amazing things, it does, it builds self-esteem and team morale. Also all members are now able to contribute equally, to self-review, philosophy development, reflection of practice.

The use of reflective questions that challenged teachers' thinking was key to success for another provider. Such questions have meant that teachers were required to come up with answers themselves, and that "change was a lot more effective if they're in the driving seat of it. So that's been a useful tool and a big part of what we do".

Another facilitator stated that her team had become better at setting expectations right at the beginning of the PD, for example making it clear that releasing teachers was really an important part of successful PD. She explained that:

"The Ministry work is only a contribution" is what I always say, and … "we will require you to release teachers during the day" and the whole business about asking for the evidence, so I think we've become better at setting the expectations at the beginning.

This same provider also found the facilitation strategies that were shared amongst the team valuable:

Seeing we're remote, we have pretty good strategies for sharing and … with the culture [of our organisation] so if I've created something, someone else is bound to find it useful and no-one ever says no, they're not at all protective of their own work and often they just put things out, "has anyone got this or that?"

Providers emphasised the importance of PD meetings having a focus on sense-making rather than delivering content to teachers. A provider reported that:

Another success thing is around, for some facilitators more than others, is around using them as mentors, in a more of a mentoring role than as a facilitator and so that's related specifically to....working with [the] owner, actually taking them out from a centre somewhere and working one to one with them over a period of time.

Finally the flexibility inherent within the current contacts was highlighted by an experienced provider:

Its strength is that people have had a say about their journey and they have been able to make some choices around where to go with this. So it's actually learning what's really important to them. Whereas you can deliver a course and you know, it may not have the lasting impact or it may not be as relevant and it may not have the ability to have that deep conversation or the dialogue because you are not building trust at that level.

Challenges

Several challenges to engaging services in reflection and on-going improvement of practice were noted by providers, including time constraints and a lack of reflective practices within the team culture. Providers identified that time was always a challenge: the time that centres put into their PD work, the release time they had available, and the time span of the PD. A provider commented that:

> Time is the commitment that centres need to make and not all teachers are prepared to make that commitment in the teams....And so you then have to rely on a good leader to share some of that information with the team. And with some of our Pasifika centres, the time, the commitments of family and church especially if we're having Saturday workshops, has been quite difficult.

An additional challenge for this provider was when teachers were not paid for attending PD meetings outside their work hours. Other facilitators from this provider also commented on this, with one stating there had been an on-going issue for some teachers about their recompense. She knew of one centre where staff, instead of getting paid for going to a staff meeting with her, "got a big bucket of KFC so... you know, it's like, how do you value teachers?" Another facilitator identified issues with this, pointing out: "if they don't get paid for it, you know the staff will just say 'Look I've got to go and pick up my kids' or 'I've got a dentist appointment' or whatever".

Another challenge concerned reflective practice where it was not part of an existing culture. This was particularly challenging if centres had not participated in a lot of PD before. One provider reported that:

> You're having to starting afresh with those teams, having to establish that culture in the first place so it's just about getting teachers to be able to reflect on practice, to think about things, to share their thoughts with others so sometimes you find yourself way back here before you get to focus on improvement of practice.

Providers found an added challenge had been the untrained teachers that they were working with, with one noting: "Sometimes it's been challenging because they haven't got that base knowledge to work with, to start with and they again need the support of the other teachers". Another provider described how it took four sessions [of the PD programme] for a teacher to fully feel grounded so "there's that kind of knowing their own identity, like where do they fit, they are in a mode of transition so it's hard to get that deep reflection".

A further challenge identified by one provider was when individuals or services thought that their existing practices were exemplary when the initial needs analysis and facilitator's observations indicated that there was significant room for improvement. Using reflective questions and asking for evidence of services' practices was effective, although this could be challenging especially when facilitators were working with new services that they had no prior knowledge of. Additional challenges experienced included getting teams to understand the difference between being a reflective practitioner and self-review, and supporting provisionally registered teachers going through teacher registration.

ONLINE SURVEY

Several questions sought responding services' views on their ability to engage in reflective practice and on-going improvement, and the effectiveness of their PD programme in supporting their development in this area. Overall, the majority of services (N= 180; 91.8%) reported their PD programme had been 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement (see Table 4.13).

Table 4.13:   Effectiveness of PD programme in supporting reflection on practice

	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not very effective	Ineffective	Unsure	Total
To your ability to critically reflect on your practices	102 52%	78 39.8%	13 6.6%	2 1%	1 0.5%	196 100%

When analysed by programme type, services enrolled in programme two and/or three were more likely to report that their PD programme had been very or somewhat effective in making a difference to their ability to critically reflect on their practices (97.4%), compared with those enrolled in programme one only (86.7%) or programme one plus programme two and/or three (93.8%). The further through their programme the more likely responding services were to indicate that their programme had been very or somewhat effective: 80.8% of those at the beginning compared with 90.6% of those in the middle and 94.8% of those who were about to finish, had finished or had begun a second round of PD.

The following table highlights the shifts in effectiveness in critically reflecting on their practices that services reported they had made as a consequence of undertaking their PD programme. Whilst only 19 services (9.8%) had felt that they were very effective in their ability to critically reflect on their practices before their PD, 102 (58.9%) felt that they were now very effective in this area as a result of their programme. A significant reduction in services who felt that they were not very effective or ineffective in this area of practice before their PD programme (N=68; 35.1%) compared with after their programme (N=5; 2.9%) was evident.

Table 4.14: **Services' assessment of their effectiveness in reflective practice before and after their PD programme**

	Percentage ranking Very Effective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Very Effective now as a result of the PD programme
Ability to critically reflect on your practices	9.8%	58.9%
	Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective before PD programme	Percentage ranking Not Very Effective or Ineffective now as a result of the PD programme
Ability to critically reflect on your practices	35.1%	2.9%

When considered by programme type similar patterns are evident. Those further through their programme were more likely to indicate that their ability to reflect critically before their PD programme was less effective than those at the beginning of their programme, suggesting that part of the learning from their PD was an understanding that their previous practices were not as strong as they once thought.

Services were asked, from a fixed response list, if their PD provider offered a selection of processes and strategies to help them engage in on-going reflection and improvement of their practices (see Table 4.15). The overall high level of responses indicates that services were likely to experience several different strategies as part of their programme. The most commonly occurring strategies and processes were engaging in Hui/discussions (N=154; 93.3%) and self-review processes (N=149 services; 90.3%). Rubrics had been experienced as a tool for reflection and improvement of practice by two-thirds of services (N=105; 67.7%) whilst just over one-half had experienced peer mentoring (N=88; 57.9%), online interactions with others (N=86; 54.8%) and PD portfolios (N=77; 51%). Respondents were given the opportunity to indicate any other strategies or processes used – nine services responded that they had experienced: support with writing learning stories (1); kanohi kit e kanohi one-to-one support (1), clusters or meetings with other services (3), workshops (2), centre visits (1), summary letters (1). Other more general statements such as "on-going support" and "new ideas" were made by five respondents. A further, less positive, comment was made by a respondent stating that they had implemented their own internal system without the PD provider's support.

Table 4.15: **Processes and strategies offered by providers to help services engage in on-going reflection and improvement of their practices**

Processes and strategies	Experienced by service		Not experienced by service		Total respondents
	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Hui/ discussions	154	93.9%	10	6%	164
Self-review processes	149	90.3%	16	9.7%	165
Rubrics	105	67.7%	50	32.3%	155
Peer mentoring	88	57.9%	64	42.1%	152
Online interactions	86	54.8%	71	45.2%	157
PD portfolios	77	51%	74	49%	151
Reflective journals	65	44.2%	82	55.8%	147
Wananga	43	32.3%	90	67.7%	133
Other (please specify)	14	43.7%	18	56.3%	32

Services were then asked to indicate, from a fixed response list, the extent to which these processes and strategies assisted them to engage in on-going reflection and improvement of their practices. As Table 4.16 below shows, the most commonly used strategies were Hui/discussions and self-review processes: 138 respondents (91.4%) indicated that Hui/discussions helped a great deal or to some extent whilst 137 respondents (88%) reported the self-review processes helped a great deal or to some extent. The next most used strategy, the rubrics, received a mixed response: just over half of the respondents (51.8%) felt that these helped a great deal or to some extent whilst 8.9% felt they had not helped at all or were unsure (9.6%) about whether they had helped them to improve their reflection and on-going improvement of their practices. These responses reflect other data from the survey indicating that not all services were aware of or used the rubrics in their programme (see Chapter 8). Other strategies for reflection identified by respondents were similar to those described in the previous question.

Table 4.16: **Extent to which processes and strategies helped services to engage in on-going reflection and improvement of their practices**

	A great deal	To some extent	Just a little bit	Not at all	We didn't use this process or strategy	Unsure	Total
Hui/ discussions	95 62.9%	43 28.5%	8 5.3%	1 0.6%	2 1.3%	2 1.3%	151
Self-review processes	91 59%	46 29.9%	4 2.6%	3 1.9%	6 3.9%	4 2.6%	154
Peer mentoring	47 39.2%	28 23.3%	10 8.3%	4 3.3%	23 19.2%	8 6.7%	120
PD portfolios	37 30.2%	36 29.5%	4 3.2%	6 4.95	29 23.8%	10 8.3%	122
Reflective journals	28 24.1%	31 26.7%	10 8.6%	7 6%	31 26.7%	9 7.8%	116
Online interactions	27 21.4%	36 28.6%	22 17.5%	6 4.8%	27 21.4%	8 6.3%	126
Rubrics	25 18.5%	45 33.3%	24 17.8%	12 8.9%	16 11.9%	13 9.6%	135
Wananga	18 18%	23 23%	6 6%	6 6%	31 31%	16 16%	100
Other (please specify)	14 41.8%	4 11.8%	0 0%	1 2.9%	10 29.4%	5 14.7%	34

Enablers

Services were asked to indicate the extent to which seven identified aspects helped their team's use of processes or strategies that supported their on-going reflection and improvement of practice. Table 4.17 indicates that each of the identified aspects were highly valued by around two thirds of the respondents: a team approach was considered very helpful by 121 respondents (72.5%) closely followed by facilitators who had an understanding of the context as well as the needs of particular services (N=117; 69.2%) and leadership within the service to keep up our momentum (N=114; 68.3%). Overall, internal team processes were valued slightly more highly than were facilitator aspects: less than 3% of respondents rated the team aspects as not helpful whilst individual aspects related to facilitators were rated as not helpful by between 4.2% and 6.6% of respondents. Across the different programme types, respondents from programmes two and/or three identified that the internal team processes were more important that facilitator aspects, perhaps reflective of the online delivery mode for many aspects of the national programmes. Services at the beginning or in the middle of their programme were less likely to view the internal team aspects as 'Unhelpful' than were services in towards the end, completed or enrolled in a second round of PD whilst services at the beginning were less likely to rate the facilitator aspects as 'Unhelpful' than were services at other points of their programmes.

Table 4.17: **Aspects helpful for ECE teams' use of processes and strategies to support on-going reflection and improvement of practice**

Aspect	Very helpful	Quite helpful	Not helpful	Total
A team approach	121 72.5%	41 24.6%	5 2.9%	167
A facilitator who understood the context and needs of our service	117 69.2%	43 25.4%	9 5.3%	169
Leadership within the service to keep up our momentum	114 68.3%	49 2.9%	4 2.4%	167
A facilitator who understood these processes/strategies	112 67%	48 28.7%	7 4.2%	167
A shared vision of what we want to achieve from our PD programme	111 66%	53 31.5%	4 2.4%	168
A facilitator who could help us collect and interpret data about our practices and children's learning	101 61.9%	54 33.1%	8 4.9%	163
A facilitator who kept us on track	100 60.2%	55 33.1%	11 6.6%	166

Barriers

Services were asked to rank from 1 (greatest impact) to 7 (least impact) a list of barriers to an ECE team using the above strategies and processes to engage in on-going reflection about and improvement of their practices. Their ratings are outlined in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: **Ranked barriers to ECE teams using strategies and processes to engage in on-going reflection and improvement of practices. Greatest impact (1) to the least impact (7)**

Barriers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
We don't have the time to use these processes	31 21.5%	29 20.1%	21 14.6%	14 9.7%	14 9.7%	7 4.7%	27 18.8%	144
Staff turnover in our service has made it hard to use these processes	17 11.9%	13 9.2%	17 11.9%	13 9.2%	12 8.5%	21 14.5%	48 33.8%	142
Our team doesn't feel very confident in using these processes	9 6.3%	22 15.4%	27 18.9%	24 16.8%	22 15.4%	10 6.9%	28 19.6%	143
Difficulties in using ICT (e.g., lack of internet access; not confident in using technology)	10 7.2%	7 5%	18 12.9%	24 17.3%	26 18.7%	16 11.5%	37 26.6%	139
Our service management has not supported our use of these processes	13 9.6%	9 6.7%	9 6.7%	9 6.7%	18 13.3%	21 15.6%	53 39.3%	135
Impact of external factors (e.g., the Christchurch earthquakes)	17 12.4 %	9 7%	4 3%	7 5%	9 7%	18 13%	68 50%	137
Other (please specify)	18 35.5%	4 7.8%	3 5.9%	2 3.9%	4 7.8%	0 0%	18 35.3%	51

The named factor ranked as having the greatest impact on their engagement in on-going reflection about and improvement of their practices was *not having the time to use these processes* (N=31; 21.5%) although 18.8% of services (N=27) also indicated that this factor had the least impact. *Other factors* (N=18; 35.5%), *external factors* (N=17; 12.4%) and staff turnover (N=17; 11.9%) were the next most highly rated barriers. Barriers having the least impact were *external factors* (N=68; 50%), *management not supporting the use of reflective processes* (N=53; 39.3%), *other factors* (N=18; 35.3%) and *staff turnover* (N=48; 33.8%).

Thirty-three respondents made additional comments about barriers to their ECE team using strategies and processes to engage in on-going reflection about and improvement of their practices. Several respondents made positive comments including: "There are no barriers to using any of the strategies. We have found that the five we do use are sufficient. Excuses are an easy way to opt out of developing your own practices professionally".

A wide range of other factors impacting on services' ability to use these processes and strategies to engage in reflection and on-going improvement were identified. Factors related to providers included the facilitator (1), facilitators having little time allocated to spend with the service (1), trying to coordinate the staff and facilitator's availability (1) and not being offered the processes to use (2). "Inconsistent times for meetings and not staying on track", and "Delayed responses to questions and stories initially made process difficult to start, administration errors with appointments and mislaid documents was frustrating" were other comments made relating to providers and facilitators.

Two services indicated structural issues that impacted including the service restructuring due to finance issues (1) and centre relocation (1). Most issues identified related to the team: their commitment (3); availability to meet outside of hours (3); communication (1) and language/cultural barriers (2); team size (1); and finding time to observe and for discussing the inquiry processes and goals during their meetings (2). One service noted that "all the families that took part left" whilst another noted "We are a new team and have to build relationships from the beginning" and a third had four staff in training that they were committed to supporting. Staff knowledge (1), the ability to interact with online discussions (1) and staff sickness (1) were the remaining barriers noted.

CASE STUDIES

In interviews, carried out as part of the case studies, teachers and/or managers were asked how effective the PD had been in supporting them to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement. Their responses indicate that most services responded positively to the opportunities for reflection that occurred due to participating in the PD programme. The discussion below also draws on documentation and observations from the case studies.

Positive engagement with self-review processes

Site evaluators reported evidence of in-depth self-review processes in several services. Examples from three case study services are offered here as illustrations.

The self-review undertaken by a service as part of their PD programme included coherent goals set as a team. Their PD folder covered their whole journey, from the emails from their mentor to the notes from hui to the individual research and study conducted by teachers. It concluded with a presentation they gave to other centres on their results and included reflections on the benefits and changes they made. The folder showed the influence that all teachers had in sharing their perspectives relating to their focus area as well as collating their reflections on their success in their programme. The folder clearly showed their progress and their on-going plans, highlighting their continued desire to reflect and review their practices on a fortnightly basis. However, these teachers also noted in their interviews that they were not reflecting as often and as intensely as they had been whilst completing the PD: they explained

this as having integrated reflection into their practices but also noted that they had eased off and "that it was nice to have a break".

The site evaluation for a second service noted that it was clear from their PD folder that staff had a reflective culture of on-going learning, goal setting, evaluation and further goal setting in relation to this PD and other PD in which they were involved. Comments from the teacher interviews also supported this. Two staff interviewed together stated that "such issues come up as a part of our everyday practice" when responding to a question about whether the rubric helped them confront and shift their practices. Staff also gave an example of how the team worked through and came to a compromise about different views they held about karakia. There was evidence from past documentation as well as the current year, which showed that members of the teaching staff were involved in regular self-review processes. It was also evident from this documentation that they continued to work on issues over time.

A third service reported that the PD programme, which they were now half way through, had been very positive thus far. One teacher stated that the PD had deepened their understanding around their focus area. This had a positive impact on their discussions with parents, with other team members and their learning stories:

> Noticing a lot more of the literacy things, sort of checking out with each other that what we saw is what we think we saw….Before when it was office time and people were writing stories you'd kind of write a story and get it in the book whereas now we put draft ones out. We write a draft story with ideas and then put them in a visible place in the staff room for other people to read and then make comments too.

This system of reading each other's learning stories allowed collegial discussion on the content, visibility of learning, addition of voices and proof reading.

This centre worked with two other services as a cluster, and had whole day sessions [Saturday] with the PD provider. Either before or after the whole day session the facilitator would come to their centre and spend the day observing, taking notes and meeting with each teacher to discuss their learning stories. The facilitator would then follow up via email. Teachers would regularly email their facilitator with learning stories that they wanted feedback on. The provider would email back with "really nice, positive comments about them, and have you thought about this or here is a resource". Questions asked by the facilitator helped one teacher to "think about the questions I was asking the parents. So nice probing questions to make me think how I can make a difference".

At the beginning of their PD programme, one teacher created a wall display showing what the centre was doing in relation to their PD focus, together with an *Information Folder for Parents*. The folder included information on how the centre responded to parents' aspirations for their children. This provided documented evidence that children at their centre were having successful experiences in relation to their focus area. This centre also surveyed parents about the focus area experiences their children were involved in outside the centre.

The PD provider made use of ICT, including blogs, Skype, email, drop box, podcasts and wiki. Some teachers were excited at the beginning of the PD about the prospect of learning new systems and technology to support their research:

> It's not something that any of us were involved with at all so it has really enhanced our digital learning I suppose. So we are blogging and drop boxing stuff and all that sort of thing so we had a great learning curve as far as that goes so sometimes in the sleep room is a good time for reading the blogs from other centres, we are posting similar information and stories so widening our understanding of all that digital thing.

The centre's manager fully supported the PD project and was conscious of the huge time commitment that this meant for her team. She paid for her staff to attend the Saturday meetings and evening meetings. "I wouldn't expect anything less of them….I find it a little annoying that the other places are not doing that for their teachers".

Negative engagement with self-review processes

Not all the case study services had had positive engagement with self-review processes. For one service, while the PD was nominally framed around self-review – it was mentioned to the Head Teacher during the first PD visit, commented on in the first report, and suggested as a framework for the final presentation – there was no evidence of an in-depth review having occurred. When asked about self-review the Head Teacher said:

> Initially when I heard about it I thought this will be great, we could really do with being able to bounce ideas off someone and lead us in the right direction and give us some good suggestions. We had had ERO and I had got the self-review folder all up to date and I thought. "well, we will really jump on the back of this, and we will carry on with it". …and I think parts of what she did were brilliant, and we have learnt a lot and it has been really good. I just can't – the whole way through I have thought "I think we could have done a little bit more with it". And I don't know – I think possibly it's time constraints. Maybe it's hard having just those four visits.

This Head Teacher wished they had had more contact between visits and that reports had provided more for them to think and talk about. The first report came later than promised and so was not available for the centre meeting; the third report came in October after a visit in May. However, teachers had found the workshops very useful and enjoyed the facilitator's enthusiasm.

Other successes

One service reported the major change that occurred as a result of their PD was their developing ability to critically reflect and adapt their practices as individuals and as a team. In addition, the Manager noticed that teachers were now able to justify their practices with the children and plan for further learning. This service described their facilitator as very supportive; the Manager noted her helpful suggestions and implementation ideas. Furthermore, the Manager noted that this PD was the first time she had seen everyone in the team working together with a shared passion and enthusiasm. She felt this meant that they could reflect on their practices as a team and see where they could do better - this was foundational to their positive development.

Another service reported that there were more complex and frequent conversations as a team about their skills and practices. Members of their teaching team depended upon each other more in planning for the children and supporting their development.

A third service found that through undertaking PD teachers spent more time communicating with each another and sought each other out to solve any problems, issues, or to clarify queries that they had. As well, having a staff member who was not the head teacher lead the PD meant they were able to disseminate roles, lessen hierarchical positions and work together competently.

Challenges

A teacher from one case study service identified the challenge and frustration experienced when their PD was not delivered either by people who had worked in the service type or who knew the special nature of their sector. In most cases this meant they had to think about how the PD would fit with their service and consider how they would apply this to the teachers who work in the service: "And sometimes we will think, well, it actually doesn't even apply".

Evaluation question 5: How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?

While there is limited evidence in the milestone reports of services strengthening their processes for reflection and improvement, there are some indications this has happened, particularly where a focus on self-review or inquiry has been a central focus. For example, comments convey the sense of ownership some services were taking in their PD journey:

> This centre [working on an infant and toddler focus] spent a term implementing changes and on reflection they have made some progress towards all of the above, however realised that they will need to work through another term of implementation to ensure the change is sustainable and becomes the new culture of the centre.

A similar sense of self-awareness and reflectiveness is indicated by the examples of services recognising they initially overrated themselves on the rubrics (see earlier sections of this chapter and Chapter 8) and of services requesting an extension of their professional development programme.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

In the interviews providers were asked what strategies they used to ensure services were able to sustain their reflective practices beyond the completion of their programme. One provider stated that they have worked on strengthening the connections between services and communities. By way of illustration, she talked about one area where they worked with centres:

> None of them would even be in the same room as each other, it was so hostile and now we've got to a point where there's a core group where they say things like, "I wonder if [teacher] from [centre] would be my appraiser", or, "I need to know about how to do something-or-other, I might just give such-and-such a ring and send me that form". So I think by the end of the project we will have eased out and strengthened that.

Another provider found that giving the services documents worked well:

> It means that this is something important I guess…it's been one of those things to say, this is how much we value it so we are giving you this stuff to keep and work with. And I think that most of our really successful centres have had the folders just bloated up, you can't even shut it now. And every meeting and all their data and everything have all gone in that. We've had comments from some of the centres where ERO has gone in for a review and they have pulled out this folder.

Cluster groups were also significant. This same provider pointed out that leadership emerged from centres grouped together so that they were starting to become self-sustaining. She described one support cluster network that:

> Has been meeting and has just started off so they are one of our first networks to fly off and I think that…having gone through the process now, within that network there are centres now that are beginning to say, that is what it was all about, and you know it's the centres who have done the journey a lot quicker who are now sharing … and asking some of the hard questions of the others. I sat in on one of the meetings and … I could see that there are individuals within that who have the confidence and the knowledge to push that reflection deeper.

Another provider reported that one of their cluster groups planned on meeting three or four times a year when their PD finished to continue with self-reviews. This cluster recognised that self-review was a big part of future ERO reviews so they wanted to continue meeting several times a year to share ideas on undertaking reviews and being reflective. This same provider felt that the key for centres strengthening their processes for reflection and improvement was the networks. She maintained, too, that these were "great value for money for the Ministry because you still probably need someone to just to keep the momentum going because we all know networks can flounder from time to time but we are having to put very little time into

them". In this contract, facilitators sometimes brought their clusters groups together "so you can sort of make them multipurpose really".

For another provider integrating self-review processes into their wider centre management and teaching practices would help ensure that services could sustain their reflective practices:

> In some areas that's more important than the association involvement. In other areas where associations have effective support networks the association involvement is important but that's not the case in all areas. So I think that the in-centre work that we have done around frameworks for self-review, integrating self-review into their office holder reports, their minutes, their meeting agendas, having self-review as a regular topic of discussion within their centres, so it becomes the norm, not something that is extra then that is when it's sustainable.

This provider also encouraged centres to develop self-review folders and stories that were available to all families in the centre as a way of keeping the concept of on-going self-reviews to the fore:

> They have their self-review folders and stories that celebrate the outcomes of the reviews, using a lot of photos and things. Having a self-review folder that they can engage with and that are interesting to read, that are stories of the great things that they are spending their time on in that centre and having self-review folders that are out on the stands with the children's portfolios, those sorts of things. As opposed to just having a folder in the office that just comes out when ERO visits every three years. That sort of shifting to it being part of daily life as opposed to just extra paper work that they have to do.

One successful strategy used by another provider was connecting services with their website, and with other relevant early childhood web environments, as once services had seen the benefits they could remain involved and continue to get resources and engage with others through their site. Like others, the provider noted that setting up the self-review process well was important so that it could be replicated in the future:

> The self-review process in itself, if the centre has really engaged with that process and has grown [a] really good model, in that case someone can step up and take responsibility for leading that process. That is a really a good way of sustaining reflective practice, so are strategies that they have experienced in PD and some of the ways of doing things do remain in centres. I'm thinking about some of the things that I've seen happen which blows me away a little bit, one simple strategy is to select a bit of a piece out of two or three articles, it might be paragraphs and do a bit of an activity, unpack that, rephrase that in their own words and what does it really mean and do a bit of that discussion. And I've seen centres actually take that on down the track, they do it themselves. There's little strategies like that and also using SWOT analysis – there's one particular centre I was back in a year later and they had very proudly said, "oh we used that because that worked". So some of those strategies and tools that we take in with us can help.

ONLINE SURVEY

The survey did not include any specific questions regarding how services have strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a consequence of the PD they undertook.

CASE STUDIES

The case study site visits gave the opportunity for teachers and management to share the different ways they had strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a consequence of undertaking the PD. A teacher from one service stated how important the cluster groups have been:

> We have also instigated a meet each other, like a facilitator sort of meet, on several occasions just to go, you know, "where are you at with it?" "how are you going?" over a cup of coffee and checked out things. Especially at the beginning we did it more often because everyone was like, "what is this rubrics business?" and how to understand it and get your head around it. So relationships with other centres grew as well.

For another service the most challenging aspect was time for these teachers to engage in what they wanted to do. One teacher commented on the challenge of addressing each step of the review process deeply when teachers were keen to jump forward to the next step.

A key group of five or six educators from another service were confident in the process of self-review for on-going reflection and improvement but the evolving nature of their service meant it was important this knowledge was passed on. The president did not think they would have made as much progress without regular input from the facilitator: "We wonder how much we will continue without the impetus, without the regular input. We will work on transition into the centre but will we keep up the progress?" They had no plans for working as part of a continuing cluster. However, they did have plenty of ideas about future directions and were already working towards these.

The site evaluator observed that this service already had an in-built component for reflection as part of their regular sessions. She noted that towards the end of the session the three women who had been 'on the team' sat down together at a table to do the session evaluation. They each contributed learning they had noticed during the session, and the details were written in on an A3 template. This example illustrated how families were not only encouraged, but empowered to be active and equal participants in the process of supporting their child's learning. The structure of the service and the involvement of all adults in team supervision meant that there was no demarcation between parent and teacher, just a distinction between those with more or less experience.

In another service a teacher spoke highly of the benefits of daily and weekly reflections, not just individually but as a team, to look at what they were doing and whether what they were implementing was effective. She believed that this reflection made them more conscientious in their practices and helped them to address aspects in addition to their PD focus. Staff members engaged in regular conversation about their PD focus along with discussing particular issues and individual children at each fortnightly staff meeting.

Four of the services provided little evidence of how they had strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement in the documentation available to the site evaluators and in discussions conducted with the teachers. A teacher from one service offered a reflection on improvements for children from the child centred approach that teachers had adopted as a result of PD that perhaps summed up how they may see their role:

> For me I see that they are learning. Their confidence and the way they interact with the staff as well and how they are capable to do things, the choices we give them they can set their own goals rather than depend on us. We decide what we need to support their interests but they cover it in their own way.

Chapter summary: The impact of PD on teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children

Level 1: Participants' learning

- **How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?**

The collective data show successes in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on children's learning, but also underline the complexity and challenge for providers in supporting teachers to make that shift [Provider reports, Provider interviews]. A first step for PD teams and facilitators was that they themselves needed to keep learning outcomes for children to the fore – and there is evidence of this occurring during the early phase of the PD [Provider interviews].

For some teachers, the called-for changes challenged entrenched attitudes and practices. In many services it was necessary to introduce the practice of reflection, and to support teachers in understanding the importance of this within their teaching role [Provider reports, Provider interviews, Online survey] Facilitators frequently found they needed to revisit processes of assessment and documentation of children's learning with teachers; a wide range of qualitative data describes significant shifts in the focus, detail and depth of learning stories [Provider interviews, Case studies]. Finally teachers have had to engage with the notion and processes of evaluation [Provider interviews]. The data indicate that while significant shifts have been made, in some services these are emerging skills [Provider interviews, Online survey, Case studies]. Overall, however, the indications of change are very positive. Teachers reported a shift in the percentage of respondents rating themselves highly effective – from 7% to 55% – for their teaching in the focus area(s) as a result of their engagement in one of the MoE-funded PD programmes.

- **How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?**

- **How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?**

It is clear that in many services facilitators found that introducing teachers to the practice of reflection was an essential first step [Provider reports, Provider interviews]. There is considerable evidence that many services responded positively to the opportunities for reflection that undertaking the PD had brought [Online survey]. A change in teacher thoughtfulness was often noted in relation to self-review and/or inquiry processes. The role of the PD providers was particularly important as they supported centres through this process. It is clear in some programmes that facilitators took an intensive role in coaching teachers in the processes of inquiry and self-review [Provider interviews].

The majority of services (91.8%) indicated in the online survey that that they had found their PD programmes 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to their own ability to critically reflect on their practices and there is also a shift in the percentage of respondents rating themselves 'Highly effective' in their ability to reflect on their practices – from 10% to 59% – as a result of the PD [Online survey]. Utilising video for teacher reflection was found to be an effective tool used by facilitators for teacher reflection and change [Provider reports, Provider interviews]. The facilitator's role was significant, too, in the process of rating services against the rubrics criteria; providing evidence of those ratings 'in action' resulted in some deep reflection by teachers [Provider interviews, Online survey].

Factors that contributed to services being slower in strengthening their reflective practices included teachers being unfamiliar with the concept of reflective practice, lack of leadership within a service, and teachers adopting 'best practices' from other services but not developing their own theoretical understandings to underpin these. Working with unqualified staff was also an issue as it took longer for teams to use self-review processes [Provider reports, Provider interviews].

Level 2: Organisational and structural support

- **How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?**

A range of factors which may support or impede providers' success in engaging teachers to focus on the impact their practices have on learning outcomes for children were identified. Among these issues of time, leadership, qualification levels of staff (Meade et al, 2012) and team involvement, regular meeting times, and a culture of reflective practice appear to be key [All data sources].

Structural aspects relating to providers that are seen to support or impede teachers' focus on the impact of their practices relate to: sustained involvement with the service, a commitment to building relationships with the service, the qualities, skills and background of the PD facilitator, and the potential flexibility of the PD programme and delivery [All data sources].

The broader structure and design of the PD contract – for example, the milestones, the focus on self-review, the rubric indicators – are seen as positive factors in keeping children's learning outcomes to the fore [Provider interviews]. In some contexts, it appeared that a PD delivery model that focused on workshops with little or no facilitator-service contact in between had proved less effective [Case studies] (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010).

- **How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?**

- **How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?**

The structure and approach of the PD programme appeared to influence the extent to which services were supported in reflecting on their practices. In particular, when PD programmes were strongly focused around the self-review process services were more likely to report adopting reflective practices [Provider reports, Provider interviews]. The importance of a leader in the centre who was committed to an inquiry process and to leading the team contributed to improved teacher practices. There was also recognition that engaging the whole team in the processes, which had traditionally been the responsibility of management for some services, was important so that all were involved in making effective changes to achieve positive long-term outcomes [Provider reports, Provider interviews].

The most significant barriers to the use of strategies and processes for on-going reflection and improvement of their practices ranked by services included: time constraints and the impact of external factors (e.g., the Christchurch earthquakes). Whilst 17% of services indicated that staff turnover had the greatest impact on them using strategies and processes to engage in on-going reflection about and improvement of their practices 33.8% stated that this had the least impact (Online survey). This implies that although staff turnover was a barrier it was not a major one for services.

Level 3: Participants' use of new skills and knowledge

- **How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?**

Ninety-six per cent of services were 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with the PD programme in making a difference to children's learning [Online survey]. Both PD providers and services gave qualitative examples that focused on changes in practices [Provider reports, Provider interviews, Online survey], and several PD providers commented on the challenges they are working with in shifting some teachers to a focus on children's learning outcomes [Provider interviews]. These are indications that in some services this is still 'work in progress'.

- **How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?**

Quantitative data from providers [Rubric rating tables in provider reports] indicates that between 57% and 93% of services (across individual rubrics) have shown a rise in their rubric rating as a result of engagement in their PD. Data from services [Online survey, Case studies] shows that 93% of services believed that their PD programme was 'Very effective' or 'Somewhat effective' in making a difference to their teaching in the focus area(s) and 95.5% were 'Very satisfied' or 'Satisfied' with this aspect of their programme. As a result of their engagement 55% of services assessed their practices in the focus area as now being 'Highly effective'. Both providers and services provide a wide range of qualitative examples that support these figures [All data sources].

- **How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?**

Evidence from all four data sources indicate that the PD programmes have already been effective in improving teacher practices in the majority of services and in a wide range of ways [All data sources] but that in other services this is 'work in progress'. The data from the teachers in the online survey were the least equivocal in describing the positive successes; data from the PD providers and the evaluators who visited the case study sites presented a more nuanced picture of the complexity of the issues facilitators are working with, the innovative approaches they are often using [Provider interviews], and what has been achieved [Provider interviews, Case studies]. A very small minority of services have found their PD programme to be less effective/ineffective, and/or have withdrawn from the PD programme. These were examples of such services in each of the PD programme groups analysed [Online survey, Case studies].

- **How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?**
- **How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?**

There was some indication of services strengthening their processes for reflection and improvement, particularly where attention to self-review or inquiry has been a central focus. Comments from the PD providers convey the sense of ownership some services were taking in their PD journey. A similar sense of self-awareness and reflectiveness was indicated by the examples of services recognising they initially overrated themselves on the rubrics and other services who requested an extension of their professional development.

Working in cluster groups proved to be important for many services for their on-going reflection. For some centres grouped together leadership evolved and this assisted them to probe their practices more deeply. Some cluster groups planned to carry on meeting when their PD finished as they wanted to continue with self-review to share ideas and reflect on the information gathered. Other successful strategies to assist services' on-going reflection include the development of resources to frame the self-review processes so that it could be replicated in the future, and connecting services with provider websites and other relevant early childhood web environments.

Level 4: Outcomes for children

- **How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?**

- **How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas?**

- How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?

Enhancing children's learning has been referred to as "the ultimate measure of successful professional development initiatives" (Sheridan et al., 2009, p.379). The evidence is that a focus on learning outcomes for children is an emerging focus for teachers; many are still engaged in the process of establishing a culture of reflective practice, and in developing their skills and confidence in assessing and documenting children's learning [All data sources]. In comparison to the many references to those two aspects of teacher practices, references to a focus on learning outcomes for children were relatively sparse [Online survey]. There are however many descriptions of learning/teaching episodes which indicate children are learning in a wide variety of ways, both within the nominated focus area(s) and beyond [All data sources].

- **How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement?**

- **How have services strengthened their own processes for on-going reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?**

The data for the evaluation questions concerning changed teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children provided some evidence of how teachers' on-going reflection did have a direct impact. Some teachers were more open to questioning themselves and each other about the purposes behind what they were doing and reflecting on what their learning outcomes for children were. Several services mentioned their increased ability to reflect regularly and deeply on their practices, especially in their learning stories, made them more accountable for supporting children's development. This gave them a much better understanding of what they were doing when they wrote about children's experiences and learning.

Chapter 5: Results: ECE services' responsiveness to children's language, culture and identity

This chapter addresses the second overarching evaluation question: *In what ways has PD changed services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?* It presents data from the document analyses, provider interviews, online survey, and case studies to answer the following two evaluation questions:

- How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?

- How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?

Evaluation Question 6: How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

While most providers offer examples of how PD has increased services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture, some do not provide any evidence. Many quite generic examples were given of how services have strengthened their relationships with parents/whānau (e.g., Māori and Pasifika families engaged and participating by sharing their skills through weaving, cooking and storytelling), although other more specific changes are also detailed.

Anecdotal evidence offered by providers includes:

- Teachers extending their knowledge and understanding of cultural competencies and becoming more practised at suspending judgment and looking for strengths in children and families.

- Increased sharing and subsequent understanding occurring between teachers and whānau, amongst teams, and between children and teachers. We are noticing more acceptance and tolerance within the community.

The following examples were given by one provider of changes made in services they worked with:

- Mokopuna learnt where their turangawaewae is, whakapapa links, whare tipuna, wharekai etc. in addition to language

- Services and teachers value the identity, language and culture of Māori and other children;

- Teachers ussing te reo confidently

- Māori content and language integrated into teaching and learning;

- Services are wanting to engage whānau

- Teachers are valuing and seeking out expertise and resources from iwi;

- Teachers researching local history

- Teachers developing understanding about what it means to have Māori learners enjoy Māori success

- Traditional ceremonies (mihi whakatau) being incorporated into service practices

- Children are speaking Māori at home and use at centre significantly increased.

Providers were asked about the ways in which services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture had increased. Every provider interviewed shared multiple examples of shifts in services' responsiveness. However, it was not always possible to tell the extent to which this increased responsiveness was a direct result of the PD programme or arose from outside influences that providers picked up on.

Many examples offered by providers focused on services building relationships and making greater connections with children's families and the wider community in order to recognise and support children's identity, language and culture. Exemplars include:

> There's a trust based centre in [location] and [I've] been quite blown away by the empowerment they have built through their engagement with the programme last year… But the growth within themselves as people and their empowerment as Māori and their sudden realization that they don't have to be anyone else, they can work from a Māori perspective has just amazed me at the way it's just gone, and immediately now they have the involvement of parents, they've come in, they're volunteering, they've contracts with people who are unemployed that come in and work beside them with the children. The whole thing is like some great giant that just had to be woken up and it was through the development of our programme that was one of those key perspectives and they speak quite strongly to that as well.

> Where I think one of the significant things that that particular centre mentioned at the beginning of the process was that we invite parents for parent evenings but nobody turns up because they think that they will be tapped on the shoulder, "can you do the accounts?" "can you help with the working bee?" and stuff. And it's changed around now in that they are appreciating the strengths and the things that the parents bring and the classic example is the father who's an accountant. Very shy. Very hesitant to come in. The teachers were convinced that he thought he would be asked to check the accounts. Which I am sure they were looking at. But through one of those conversations, when those conversations started happening about the programme, the teachers were talking about music and how this particular child is interested in music and they said, "what's happening at home?" He's really into music and it turns out that the father plays the cello. So when he was approached in that way and the teachers asked if he could come in and share that, and he did and he played with the children ... He wasn't precious or anything. But he loved that experience so much that a few months later he actually put his hands up and said, "if you want help with your accounts I'm happy to look at it". And I think that was in the meeting the centre meeting, the teachers kept saying, "that's the way to do it". If you get the relationship and the buy in and then the rest of it just keeps happening. You know, the working bees. You get more volunteers for a trip to the zoo. You get more volunteers. It's about valuing what they are bringing so I think that's been one of the most significant visible shifts in these centres where parents have become more visible in the centre every day.

One provider described how the te reo Māori language programme that they offered had moved beyond the teachers to children, whānau and the community:

> They are becoming authentically bilingual and I think the other thing is that they are going home and teaching their brothers, sisters and parents and the services are getting letters and feedback from the parents which we are really excited about. That is the community aspect having gone from the mat-time to the playground to the home to the community.

Providers whose programmes emphasised Māori concepts and ways of knowledge described the impact on services:

> The sense of whakapapa has been one thing that has absolutely blown me away especially in [location] and the centre with all the mainstream staff and predominantly mainstream whānau, when they started their journey when we did whanaungatanga the most important thing they found was they got to learn about their own whakapapa as staff. Then they realised the value of 'this is me' and it was vitally important that they knew about every single child in their centre. And in another centre a Māori staff member she didn't know her whakapapa and every time we went in there she cried because it started her journey about finding out who she is. So that's grown really, really strongly in [location] is the importance

of who you are and it's what is written in Te Whāriki because when [facilitator] went down and spoke to them the words that have stuck in a lot of those centres' mind is when that child walks in they have a korowai with ancestors and everything and all these centres have remembered that so they now see every child come through and they know about them. So that true sense of belonging.

For some services, the shifts went beyond recognising the cultures that children identified with to thinking about how culture and identity played out for individual children and their families, and to asking families so that they could individualise their responses:

Going back to the earlier question of how the teachers are seeing the children. I think one of the examples that is, was quite significant was the whole, I suppose, stereotyping that we tend to do when it's a culture we don't know too much about. There were assumptions around gender and around kinds of play and particularly around social competence and I think those through the process have been questioned and so I think repeatedly teachers are now looking at individual children and their family context and what they are bringing and moving away from that, "these are Somalian refugee families therefore," sort of not doing those sweeping assumptions but actually checking back with the individual families if certain food items are ok, not making assumptions about food choices or clothing choices.

One provider described how services they were working with were including parents and the wider community in the development and review of the services' philosophy statements:

One of the big successes was a centre setting up a community group that included parents as part of their vision development so that they had everybody's aspirations on board and they didn't adjust it to the parents they stuck to the wider community as well, they really wanted to involve everybody. They wanted the parents to write the opening statement to their philosophy from their perspective on how they view that unique team and that unique centre.

For some services, an increased awareness of and responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture occurred very early in their programme. One provider described how they incorporated discussion around this programme focus in their initial presentations to services so that it was positioned centre-stage, and reported anecdotal evidence of teachers shifting their thinking and practices the following day in their service:

When we've gone into the centre within the next week or two, they've said "yes and we're in," several have said, "Oh, the next day in the centre when a child walked in, I knew exactly what I thought, I was going to say something about the way their hair was done up" and she said, "and I stopped myself because I realized that that's communicating messages about identity". So we've got teachers who come to the presentation just about the project and they go back the next day and they are different and that wasn't even our intention but they've stopped and they've thought about how what they're doing is creating realities for children and they are different, the next day.

ONLINE SURVEY

Services were asked to indicate firstly, the extent to which their PD programme had focused on children's language, identity and culture and, secondly, the extent to which their PD programme had helped them to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture. Depending on their response to the latter question, services were then given the opportunity to provide examples of how they were now more responsive to children's identity, language and culture or, alternatively, why they felt that there had been no change in their service's responsiveness. Data from these questions are discussed here and under Evaluation Question 7 later in this chapter.

Table 5.1: PD focus on and services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture

	To what extent has your PD programme focused on children's identity, language and culture?		To what extent has your PD programme helped your service to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture?	
A great deal	76	44.1%	79	45.9%
Quite a lot	58	33.7%	56	32.6%
A little	31	18%	28	16.3%
Not at all	5	2.9%	5	2.9%
Not sure	2	1.2%	4	2.3%
Total	172	100%	172	100%

Of the 172 respondents to this question, 44.1% felt their PD programme had focused a great deal and 33.7% felt that it had focused quite a lot on children's identity, language and culture. In total, almost one-quarter felt their programme had focused a little (18%), not at all (2.9%) or were unsure (1.2%). Respondents from programme one (80%) and programme one plus two and/or three (85.7%) were more likely than respondents from programmes two and/or three (71.5%) to say that their programme had focused on children's identity, language and culture 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot'. The further through their programme, the more likely respondents were to agree that their programme had focused on children's identity, language and culture 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot': rising from 50% of those respondents at the beginning of their programme to 78.2% of those in the middle of their programme and 83.3% of those who were about to finish, had finished or had begun a second round of PD.

Very similar results were found for the second question which asked to what extent their PD programme had helped the service to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture: 45.9% felt their programme had helped a great deal and 32.6% felt that it had helped quite a lot. Slightly fewer services felt that their programme had helped a little (16.3%), not at all (2.9%) or were unsure (2.3%). When considered by programme type, the results were also very similar to those for the first question: 80% of programme one respondents, and 85.7% of programme one plus two and/or three respondents felt their PD programme had supported them to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture compared with 72.9% of programme two and/or three respondents. Again, progress through the PD programme was linked to positive responses to this question: 50% of those at the beginning, 76.1% of those in the middle, and 85.3% of those who were about to finish, had finished or had begun a second round of PD reported that their PD programme had helped them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' in being more responsive to children's identity, language and culture.

Those respondents who had indicated that their PD programme had helped them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' were then asked to provide an example of how their service was now more responsive to children's identity, language and culture. Almost all these respondents (N = 130) provided a written response to this question.

Analysis of these examples reveals the overlaps between recognising, valuing and supporting different aspects of children's identity, language and culture. For example, many services referred to strengthening the relationships that they had with children's parents and families whilst also commenting on how these strengthened relationships enabled them to learn more about the children's lives outside the service and their parents' values and aspirations for their children. The example below illustrates the value that services place on strong relationships:

> We have become better at being more inclusive of parents' aspirations for their children and have reflected on the importance of our home visits; although they are time consuming they are important to developing responsive and reciprocal relationships building a strong community.

Asking for information about children and their families and finding ways to involve parents and whānau in the service was evident in a significant number of responses to this question. These included:

> By encouraging whānau support and participation we are gaining a wider range of knowledge for the child in terms of home life, how whānau or mum/dad views different things. Getting everybody involved and maintaining their connection with the child is very important.

A number of services indicated that they were incorporating their increased understandings about children's identity, language and culture into their assessment practices, documentation of and planning for children's learning. Examples included:

> As part of our self-review process we gathered quantitative and qualitative evidence to find out about our interactions with children and whānau. We are now much more aware of children's backgrounds and have made a conscious effort to make the environment and the children's portfolios, and wall displays much more inclusive of our diverse cultural community.

Several responses indicate that some services are using multiple lenses to reflect on aspects of identity, language and culture and have developed a more inclusive stance:

> While we have always supported all cultures, language and identity we found that the rubrics with the Pasifika content made us really question/reflect on our practices and how little we actually use Pasifika.

Services also gave examples of changes they had made to their environments and resources to better reflect the cultural identities of their children and families:

> We have renewed all of our bicultural and multicultural literacy resources. There are so many new resources around which are much easier to use and more appropriate for use by the children, these are also being used by our less competent staff members and helping them to feel more confident about working with children from other cultures. The rubrics have also been fantastic for this because we can begin at the end and build on our skills. Our progress can easily be followed and acknowledged.

A significant number of responses focused specifically on changes to services' practices in relation to using te reo me ngā tikanga Māori:

> Bi-cultural practices, especially knowledge of and use of te reo within the centre and to some degree outside the centre (children's home environment) has improved amongst staff and children. Staff and children's knowledge of local myths, legends and customs is increasing. Children are able to respond to commonly used phases without need for translation. Parents appear to be more comfortable and confident in sharing information about their whānau, iwi etc and also appear less self-conscious in responding in te reo to greetings, farewells etc.

Examples of how services were more responsive to children and families from different cultural groups were also offered. These included:

> We have over 20 different ethnic groups at this centre with a number of different languages, barriers and cultural differences. Through our PD with [provider] we have embraced these differences, turned our centre into a marvellous multi-cultural centre with a bi-cultural element and are bringing together our families of which many have only had something to do with their own cultures. Our children are loving exploring other cultures and it certainly helps us as teaching staff to appreciate all our different qualities as we are also a very diverse cultural mix of educators. We have more understanding and patience and do not expect every child to do the same thing just because we as educators think they should.

Examples of how services were recognising and supporting children and their families to use their home languages and of support for those who had English as an additional language were given:

Greater recognition of incidental aspects of identity, language and culture – children are encouraged to speak to each other in their own language (usually Mandarin), as well as using English and te reo. Teachers encouraged to speak to the children in their own language if it is common to both, as well as using English and te reo. Children are encouraged to talk about aspects of their own culture - for example, Tangi, Festival of Eid-al-adha.

One service provided an example of how they had addressed concerns about boys' identities of themselves as learners:

Boys are largely assimilated into the greater feminine world of ECE. Those who identify themselves as such find it difficult to be themselves when a lot of play that comes naturally is banned and interests they may have that are different/ unacceptable are not shared or valued. As a result their learning suffers and they do not reach their potential in literacy or numeracy... The boys in this centre now compete on equal footing with the girls. They are represented in equal numbers at writing tables and in work they produce. Their interests are catered to and the work they produce that follows their interests is valued. They have a bond among their peers that comes through a lot of play that we allow here now that makes them feel as accepted and as valued as much as the girls in our centre.

Finally, examples were offered that suggested that the services felt they were already responsive to children's language, culture and identity before their PD programme – in some instances, the PD had been a useful reminder to them:

We have always tried to understand and research about different cultures and protocols and this PD has helped us go through those ideas again.

The 37 services who had answered the earlier question about the extent to which their PD programme had helped them to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture with 'A little', 'Not at all', or 'Unsure' were asked why they felt there had been no change in their service's responsiveness. Of the five services who responded to this question two indicated that they were at an early stage of their programme. One service noted that "This was not a focus of the PD, and we already had sound practice in place, with self-reviews in place" whilst another said: "We are a bilingual tikanga based service being supported by a PD service provider who isn't so they can't assist us in this area". The final service was critical of the PD programme they had received, commenting that the "[service name] has developed their own methods and support systems. We have utilised external paid professional development as our provider has been totally ineffective (useless at best)".

CASE STUDIES

During the case study site visits, evaluators looked for evidence of how the services had increased their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture. Evaluators interviewed teachers and educators, spoke with parents and whānau, conducted an environmental and document analysis and gathered vignettes that illustrated children's identities, languages and cultures being recognised, supported and celebrated within the service.

The impact of the PD programmes on increasing individual services' responsiveness to children's language, culture and identity sits on a continuum from little or no impact through to significant and enduring impact. Several services were already strong in this area and there was little evidence of enhanced responsiveness a result of the PD programme: the evaluator for one such service included the following comments in her summary for the site visit:

Although there is much evidence of valuing children's identity, language and culture in the centre, this is not, in my opinion, as a result of the professional development work undertaken during the year, but is due to the centre's strong philosophical commitment to te reo Māori, tikanga and te ao Māori. The parents interviewed indicated they are very happy with the way the centre supports their children's learning of culture, language and identity. The centre's philosophy is based upon supporting children's identity, language and culture.

In another centre, the evaluator's summary noted:

> What I experienced going into the setting was a culture of encouraging support. The focus seemed to be on building mana and resilience. Māori language and tikanga are evident in both the environment and the teaching practices. Thus all children's national identity is being nurtured; for Māori and Pākehā children their personal cultures as well. For other ethnic groups the links to their personal culture are not so evident although the family member interviewed emphasised the importance the teachers place on finding out about families' own practices and gave food and children's names as an example. She also placed a great deal of importance on the *Whānau board* (which has photos and names of children and parents) as one of the ways that families come to know and recognise each other as members of the centre community. However it is unclear whether these practices have changed as a result to the PD, it seems more likely that these are part of longstanding practice in the setting.

In some other case study services there appeared to be limited attention paid to being responsive to children's identity, language and culture either prior to the PD programme or as a result of the PD programme. In one site visit, evidence noted by the evaluator suggests that token efforts were being made with regard to biculturalism and involving parents. The displayed philosophy of the umbrella organisation contained statements such as: "We value… the bicultural heritage of Aotearoa" and "we recognise Te Tiriti o Waitangi as the founding document of Aotearoa and actively work to make this visible in all that we do (e.g. through te reo tikanga, consensus decision making)" and "Sharing diverse cultures with our children allows them to better understand what makes them special as New Zealanders" but the philosophy statement of the service itself had no reference to other cultures or to bicultural values and was in English.

Educators in this centre reported that responding to identity, language and culture was not a focus of the PD and parents interviewed seemed surprised at the topic. They all positioned themselves as Pākehā and did not see it as an issue. One said she felt "very well catered for". When asked about the wider community, a parent noted it contained quite a large Māori population. She described that a Māori woman with a son had attended the centre for half a term, coming quite regularly, but then just stopped: "I'm not sure why". A Korean woman had also attended the centre with her children quite a while ago. Only English was heard in the centre and there was very little evidence of other cultures: there was one Chinese-style suit in the dress-up area and brass Eastern-style vases in the treasure basket. Limited Māori resources were evident.

Two other services were unable to share examples of how they were more responsive to children's identity, language and culture as a result of their PD programme. Both these services noted that there had been no change in the demographics of families attending but one manager did note that:

> … I realise now one of the positive things was where we met two of the other centres they were very proficient at saying their mihi and we weren't, it wasn't a strength of ours. So we sort of set a goal that that is what we would learn throughout this time. So one of the teachers surprised us at one of our meetings that she wanted to say her mihi. She is not a New Zealander, she is a South African and she said her mihi. So that is one of the things we learnt – learning the language is so important at a young age.

Many services were already working in a number of ways to be responsive to children's identity, language and culture, and there was evidence that their PD programmes assisted them to develop their practices further. The following summary from a teacher interview give a flavour of the kinds of changes in practice reported:

> This teacher has a new perspective on how to utilise the Māori culture within her teaching. She has learnt not to water it down but to be confident in incorporating aspects in all that she does. The PD helped to strengthen what she knew already as well as teaching her some new information from those in her cluster group. In regards to the different cultures, she has learnt cultural sensitivity and not being tokenistic about others' ethnicities and she now has the confidence to speak to more people about things that are important to them.

Analysis of the service environments and documents such as portfolios and planning also indicate shifts in practice as a result of the PD:

> The professional development policy encourages teachers and management to update their knowledge and respond to current issues. It states that the most appropriate people to support the revitalisation of the Māori language and convey Māori cultural protocols are Māori and they feel the same applies for Samoan as well.

> The culture and identity of children is clearly evident around the centre, not only with family photos and holiday snaps of children; but also with pictures of home countries or places of importance. Notice boards encourage parents to come in and join for meals or play times - which they did do - and weekly timetables show parents are coming in and sharing some of their own culture or life. In the centre displays there is a high prevalence of Māori karakia and waiata, as well as translations of words in Māori and Spanish. There is a need for teachers to use sign language in this centre and there are many images and pictures around the walls that remind children and teachers what different signs are so as to be able to communicate effectively with children. The resources are varied, in particular, puzzles, books, dress ups, games and art activities reflect the many cultures of the centre. Furniture is used in a culturally respectful way, for example, beds in the home corner are on the floor to reflect the many different ways that people sleep.

Case study summaries prepared by the evaluators included examples such as the following:

> As a team the teachers go from strength to strength in acknowledging children's culture, language and identity, there are many aspects of this in the physical environment and through the daily interactions between themselves and the children. This was highlighted in the ERO report as well as commented on by the parents whom I spoke to.

Finally, there were some case study services in which it was evident that the existing commitment and responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture together with the impact of the PD programme was combining in powerful ways, as these examples from teacher interviews indicate:

- The work has helped us to acknowledge being Māori and doing Māori things. These are understandings we had either suppressed in the past, or we didn't know but the work has helped us express them, it has empowered us to be Māori

- The provider supported us to use strategies from te ao Māori that were not tapu. It made sense to us because it was based on what Māori do and what being Māori is about. The work was about developing deeper understandings, recognising being Māori at a deeper level.

- I have become more encouraging, positive in working with staff. It has made me value being Māori as a living thing, and not as lesser to being Pākehā. It has helped us appreciate whānau more rather than putting them down.

- The work was able to whakamana Māori ways of knowing and being. It was meaningful for us in that it deepened our kaupapa and allowed us to do more than we have in the past. It was about linking our kaupapa to practice.

Case study summaries also noted changes in these services as a result of the PD programme:

- There was considerable evidence of significant and increasing use of te reo Māori in both spontaneous verbal exchanges, mat-time experiences, planned experiences, documentation on the walls, teaching materials made and/or used by staff and in examples of children's portfolios examined. This included single words used as part of English sentences and Māori phrases and sentences. The phrases and sentences used were not restricted to directions but used descriptive and questioning forms also including examples of metaphorical language such as that found in whakataukï and karakia.

- Indoors there are many visual symbols and decorations that represent Māori, Pacific Island and Indian cultures. For example adult paintings with Māori themes e.g. the

kindergarten taniwha; kete of various sizes and shapes used to hold information sheets or store materials for children's play; tapa and screen printed materials used as examples of art work and as the background covering for noticeboards; material of Indian design used to lower the ceiling in one part of the play room; Indian dolls/puppets displayed on the wall by the area where the afternoon mat time was held; woven harakeke flowers in a kete on the bench close to the kitchen.

Informal parent and whānau interviews were undertaken where possible during the case study site visits. During these conversations, evaluators asked how well they felt the service recognised and valued their child's identity, language and culture. In almost all instances, responding parents and family members were positive about the teachers' practices but, again, it was not always easy to tease out the extent to which these practices had been developed or strengthened through the PD programme. Examples from the parent and whānau interviews are provided below:

- This parent has been involved in the centre for five years and has noticed a stronger influence of families' values into the curriculum and planning of the centre. This has been really positive as the parents can see more and more of their own culture emerging in the teachers' understanding and practices within the centre.

- My son is bilingual, coming to [centre] has strengthened the cultural learning, that has been the really great thing about it. Like knowing the basics, like Lotu is prayer, and being from a Catholic family, and you know he knows everything in [language]. Until now he still doesn't know the true representation of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, but he says this in [language] and Amen is always Amene, and he really… he loves his music, he does the traditional dancing ,the drumming especially, was something, he was introduced to music at an early age, that has come through [centre].

- This parent cannot speak highly enough of how the teachers of the centre respect and recognise the individual needs and identity and culture of her children. One of her children has a developmental delay with the other having behaviour issues and she has always received the highest level of support and strategies in working with these two children. In particular the child with developmental delays has been strongly embraced by the team and many changes have been put in place to help the other teachers, children and families engage with this child in a responsive and supportive way.

Finally, evaluators looked for evidence of children's identity, language and culture being valued and affirmed by teachers within the centre. The following vignettes give a sense of the ways in which teachers' practices are supporting children's identity, language and culture:

- A music session is in progress. The teacher leading the session addresses the children in [Pacific Nation language]. The children respond acting out her commands. A traditional [Pacific Nation] haka is performed by the boys who energetically and with much enthusiasm stamp their feet and beat their chests. The haka is performed with much gusto but also with recognition of the words and the movements. The girls meanwhile observe the boys but do not join in. They recognise that this is a male performance. When the boys have finished, the teacher signals to them that it is their turn and they then begin their performance. A girls' dance in which they also demonstrate the actions and words to the song competently and knowledgeably.

- Every Thursday morning a mother comes into the centre to engage with the children during their daily interactions and activities using her family's home language of Spanish. Her child attends the centre and they speak Spanish fluently at home. The centre felt that rather than overtly teaching the children Spanish they would do it through everyday interactions. The parent subtly moves around the groups of children and just talks with them about what they are doing, adding in some Spanish words and phrases along with their English translations. These words and phrases are used at other times of the day as well, where applicable, but particularly in conversation with the child who is Spanish. The teachers comment to me later that they have observed that the children were picking up

on the new words and phrases quickly and were able to recite them back if asked. In addition, children greet the mother in Spanish. The teachers send notes home to parents of the words learnt so they can continue the learning at home, and to help them make sense of what their children are saying. Learning stories displayed on the walls and in profile books highlighted examples when children are using Spanish in their play.

- A parent comes into the morning session and teaches the children how to use poi and do the hula - something which is part of her family's culture. The children took great delight in participating in this and stories and drawings were put in their books to share with their parents.

Evaluation Question 7: How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

A variety of approaches were taken to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture. A number of providers mentioned that valuing identity, language and culture underpinned all aspects of their programme and this was highlighted and discussed in initial meetings in some cases.

Some providers had an aspect of their programme dedicated to this including a self-review focus on language, culture and identity and workshops. The milestone reports do not give much detail on how these programme elements were delivered and to whom.

Other specific examples of where identity, language and culture were included as part of other components included:

- Identification of culturally responsive practices in relation to large Māori and Indian populations in transition to school focus.

- Focus on identity, language and culture including "consideration given to how advisors and centres could thread language, culture and identity into their centre programme and what this looks like in practice?"

- Giving participants readings related to identity, language and culture or frameworks of Māori values.

- Notions of language, culture and identity included through content developed for online programmes.

Two programmes focus on kaupapa Māori and mātauranga Māori perspectives and therefore inherently support services' responsiveness to Māori language and culture.

Many milestone reports comment generally on building relationships with family/whānau for example "weaving parent and whānau engagement through their chosen area in order to support children's identity, language and culture". Other providers did not specifically mention how they worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture in their milestones.

Several comments were made about the effectiveness of using either facilitators who were Māori or Pasifika, or calling on outside experts to provide support in this area. One provider used mentors in the field of Māori language, culture and identity to support advisers whilst another formed partnerships with external organisations to run workshops on Māori values.

Providers were asked about the approaches that they used to increase services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture, and to identify any particular successes and challenges that they had faced in improving teacher practices in this area. The importance of preparing facilitators to effectively support services was noted:

> The picture is that the facilitators do have a kete of resources and ideas and strategies that are woven into all of their work and … language, culture and identity is positioned quite central regardless of what focus area it's fitting in, so the question is "So what does this mean for our Māori and Pacific children or families? Are they thinking about our Māori and Pasifika families and children? Where does the data show us?" That's the type of challenges we've been using, the way facilitators work. And then the additional strategies that we might use, some of our scoping initially was around looking at local environments and relationships, so it might be connecting up people, it might be connecting people with the local marae, Māori and Pasifika services.

A wide range of strategies and approaches were utilised by providers, as in this example:

> Right, the self-review model itself using *Nga Arohaehae Whai Hua*, it is a very reflective model where centres will be, as they work through that process no matter what their topic, they will be looking at how it impacts on outcomes for children and how the work they are doing reflects the make-up of that centre, who their centre community is, who their families are. So I guess that there is an element of reflectiveness that just comes through in each self-review programme. We use specific Ministry documents like *Ka Hikitia, Taitiako, Kei Tua o te Pae, Te Whatu Pokeka*, and [we have] done things like acted out Māori myths and legends and then analysed them to see what are the messages for Māori learners that are coming through in our myths and legends, we've used some of the ideas. We've had time with Lesley Rameka and looked at some of the work that was done in *Te Whatu Pokeka* in terms of Māori values and how we used those in our assessments ensuring that children, that assessment for learning reflects children's unique identities, cultures and languages. We've worked with our parents to ensure that all parents have the opportunities to share their aspirations for their children and to share what they want from [service] and from the programmes that are available for their children in terms of whānau involvement and child, and their children's learning journeys. Our PD people are usually representative of the community and the people that we are working with are the parents of the centres. Working with them to support them to have strong links with their community so that the community is reflected in the centre and therefore the children's language, identity and culture are reflected in the centre programme.

This provider went on to describe the successes that they had had with using Māori legends as a vehicle to understand the messages for Māori learners:

> I would say success has been working with the myths and legends because that is something that all centres know. That they have in their libraries. … that they read to their children prior to the PD, so they have already got established links to these books, to these myths and stories and … yet have often never thought about what messages are coming through from these stories for Māori learners. So the analyzing and looking for some of the values or some of the dispositions or some of the messages that come through about what is important for Māori through those stories has been a really useful way of engaging parents and just getting them to strengthen what they already do but take it to the next level, the next level of thinking and then challenging them to think about it. [It] then comes through into the children's portfolios and learning stories, the assessment documentation and also visually in the centre. One centre worked with, one of the parents was an artist. We didn't know at the time. She then drew the local legend of her area and made a visual display within the centre of these local legends which we then looked at. Taking it beyond ones that are in the standard books within the centres.

Providers were using a range of Ministry resources and documents as part of their focus on identity, language and culture, and several expressed surprise at the number of services who were unaware of these resources or of the Education Review Office national reports. As a

result providers often incorporated material from these into resource packs for services. Providers also described using the core rubrics with services, regardless of the focus area:

> So if a centre chose literacy it would be from the perspective of how do we engage parents in literacy? What kinds of literacies are coming through? And what kinds of literacies can the parent and the community bring to the centre. We did the same with the Māori children. What's the literacy that the Māori community and families are bringing in and the same for Pasifika. And the educational leadership question which was rubric C was also tied to what is the centre doing as a pedagogic leader to actually bring in the community and the parents in those perspectives so we did that with literacy. We did it with numeracy and with social competence, transitions, infants and toddlers. I think that helped bring the conversation always back to the core.

Another provider shared how they:

> … made links with *Kei Tua o te Pae* and the importance it places on really knowing your child, that kotahitanga, funds of knowledge and getting them to look at how they can gather that information and then, because they can't value it if they don't know that information, so it's about how do they build ways that they can gather the information and then they have to figure out ways that they're going to show that they value it so that it keeps that relationship going.

One provider described how their initial scoping with services helped them identify two key areas to work on with services:

> I think originally when we engaged with all of the services one of the things we had to quickly do was identify what were their strengths and what they were wanting to develop and something that was really, really surprising was that all of the services wanted to increase their te reo, reflect the unique place of Mana Whenua. And they were the two things that we were concentrating on most. Increasing te reo, increasing confidence to implement te reo and reflecting the unique place of heritage. So we ran two programmes largely with most of the groups. Of increasing te reo Māori the biggest barrier was confidence so we developed a model to help support that growth in confidence and one of the things that we thought would increase their confidence and we were right, was appropriateness, in the use of te reo Māori, using the local dialect and having good pronunciation. We also developed a method for increasing te reo Māori and we have called it 'te reo arenga' and that has also been very, very successful.

Some providers emphasised concepts of identity and community with services from the earliest part of their programmes. In the following example, the provider broadened the focus beyond children's identity, language and culture to consider these for all involved in the service:

> Probably one of the main things we've done is make sure the centre has clarity on what it is, what its own identity is as a service in its community, how it sees, as a group how they see themselves as being there in service of their community. We also put these concepts, in the presentation that we do up-front…each of them dropped out and we talk about the significance of each of the three and the power of language to create realities and all of this sort of thing. So, because we've done all this sort of front loading on those ideas and those concepts, when we come to challenge something around any of these, we come back to the original presentation and we can hook it back in. So that's how we've really set quite a platform that it's always going to be there.

One provider noted how the focus on children's identity, language and culture within the programmes had created space for teachers to actually have conversations about these aspects of their work:

> I think one of the biggest successes perhaps for all of the centres that have been part of this process … has been that it has become the focus of the conversation. I think centres have been so caught up with the everyday, with the programme plan and just the routines of the day that sort of become the focus. It's given centres the opportunity to actually have those conversations. And I think sometimes it can be quite a difficult conversation to have. For some centres it's almost felt like the elephant in the room that nobody wants to talk

about. There are centres that at the beginning of the process very clearly said "aren't we multicultural? Why do we need this, [doesn't] all our practice value children and cultures?" But I think that's when the rubric tool provides us a bit of those indicators to drill down especially the second edit of the rubric which actually gave us the sort of document to ask those difficult questions.

This provider then went on to explain that the number of staff in services that they were working with who had migrated to New Zealand and had less knowledge about the important place of the Treaty of Waitangi was perhaps an influence on why these conversations were needed.

One provider had used *Te Whatu Pokeka* extensively within its PD programmes to help services engage in kaupapa Māori assessment:

… they find that working with *Te Whatu Pokeka* gives them a deeper understanding of children's learning … because *Te Whatu Pokeka* requires you to look beyond the technical skills of the child to actually what they bring with them. The skills that they already have and really *Te Whatu Pokeka* is about staff learning a whole lot more about children than what they knew before.

The staff learning what they know and what they need to know. Then we have a centre in [location] who use *Te Whatu Pokeka* and they work with lower socio economic families with a lot of problems and their staff have also used aspects of *Te Whatu Pokeka* to work with parents in terms of abuse, domestic problems, especially with the women who go to refuge. They are using *Te Whatu Pokeka* in terms of the counselling and support services.

ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey did not directly ask respondents *how* their providers had worked with them to increase services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture. Evaluation Question 6 above provides examples from services of their increased responsiveness, the range of which suggests providers are taking a holistic and broad approach to considering, in particular, children's identity and culture. Immersion Māori and Pasifika service respondents did, however, offer comments on the effectiveness of their providers working with them in culturally appropriate ways. Their feedback, together with that from teachers from the case study services (two Immersion Māori and two Pasifika) is summarised separately in the section below.

CASE STUDIES

Data collection in the case study component did not focus directly on *how providers supported services* to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture. During their interviews, teachers were asked to indicate how they were more responsive as a result of their PD programme, rather than the strategies and approaches their providers had used to increase their responsiveness.

IMMERSION MĀORI AND PASIFIKA SERVICES

Three Immersion Māori and seven Pasifika services responded to the online survey. Because these numbers were relatively low, across the total survey responses, additional case study services were selected that represented both Immersion Māori and Pasifika services. Across both the survey and case study data, a number of respondents highlighted the need for Māori and Pasifika providers and facilitators who were cognisant of the needs of their centres and could deliver in appropriate ways, utilising appropriate languages, protocols, practices and resources materials. Respondents felt this would be more likely to make sense to and engage Māori and Pasifika centres and teachers, and ensure that the support provided was relevant to the needs of the centres, families and communities. Without this type of support teachers in these centres felt disadvantaged. For example, teacher survey responses included:

It would be helpful to have a choice of a facilitator that 'best matched' the service we provide ie. Samoan immersion & context. I know our staff would be better engaged if they had a Samoan facilitator. As we did ask the one they did have and she advised not able to because she had a set amount already. The focus MoE had in responding to culture, language and identity we believe the PD programme fell short in. The PD providers need to look at the facilitators they hire to ensure they are better matched for the community they deliver to. In discussion with our facilitator we questioned her about this rubric which she was honest in saying she did not know how to deliver on this (being non pacific) and not sure what the MoE was requesting.

What could be improved was having ...[someone who] could speak Samoan to our teachers to get more engagement and depth of conversation. The response was, there was only 1 facilitator that could speak Samoan and she already had a heavy load which we understood. We would like to see the programme extended however with a facilitator that delivers in the context of language and culture for our centres.

A Māori Immersion case study service reiterated these sentiments:

The service found that their facilitator was unable to integrate Māori protocols into the PD delivery, and much of the material used was from a Pākehā perspective. Team members reported feeling inadequate as though they had been unsuccessful in their PD programme.

A teacher in a Pasifika case study centre stated:

I identify a gap where a stronger focus on the part of the PD provider should have been given to the notion of cultural competence, as well and what social and cultural competence might look like from a [Pacific Nation] perspective.

Where there was a fit between the facilitator and the centre satisfaction with the PD programme was high. This is highlighted in the summary report for both Māori immersion and Pasifika case study centres, as in these examples:

As the provider was a Māori organisation, facilitators were able to adhere to Māori protocols and encounter understandings which meant the work moved very quickly and effectively. Staff spoke warmly of the providers noting how helpful they had been and how easy it was to contact them for support. For this reason the professional development has been hugely successful and has impacted markedly on the centre operation on many levels.

The professional development focus – Whatu Pokeka – has been integrated into almost all aspects of the centre operation. This has required that staff reflect deeply on their past, to move forward. In 2011 staff members were asked to complete a journal that documented their reflections and self evaluations, their personal and professional journeys, and how these have impacted on who they are today and where they're going. This exercise was an emotional and spiritual experience for some, sometimes disturbing and distressful, but in the end hugely rewarding, energising and freeing. All of the staff members who participated in 2011 stated they had gained a lot of knowledge, understandings, pride and confidence. One staff member described it as 'wonderful' and they are grateful to the provider for opening the pathways that allowed them to grow as people and professionals.

I attended last year with literacy and numeracy so we did our own [Pacific Nation] way how we use the measurement so after we teach the children how to use the measurements in our languages, we brought out own string, we use the fingers and the feet as well and we made our own songs in our own languages for counting and measurement

Teacher survey responses concurred:

She [facilitator] was aware of our backgrounds and acknowledged it in the PD sessions. Our provider made the difference, whilst she was at times a little hard to get hold of she knew her whakapapa, history and teaching pedagogy well. She was able to walk the talk and inspire my team to want to learn and grow. She respected our centre kaupapa and demonstrated this at all times

We were able to focus on an area of study that was both relevant and of interest to our centre and our participating members which ensured the on-going motivation and desire to effect a change in practice

When asked 'How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children?' teachers from a Samoan case study service responded positively:

Very successful; the team have been very committed to the focus area. They have contextualised numeracy and literacy, weaving in natural materials and traditional Samoan resources and teaching to ensure positive learning outcomes for children.

The emphasis in this setting has been on linguistic literacy. In the area of literacy the main focus is how to extend the Samoan language: "The way we talk clearly and nurture the children, and introduce them to the language. We read a lot, and use songs poems, role play". The site evaluator noted that "Teachers generally use a group learning, and adult driven approach to impart Samoan language. Children are familiar with the mat time routines and many are very proficient in Samoan" whilst a teacher interviewed felt it had been very useful to weave in the use of natural materials such as shells for counting activities to align with a "Pacific way".

Centres also identified the importance of the appropriate learning communities. One Pasifika teacher response in the teacher survey stated:

We'd much prefer to have a PD session by ourselves otherwise with the four other Pasifika Centres within our complex (neighbouring preschools from [location] Pasifika ECE Trust.

A Māori Immersion case study service also reported a preference for participating in a cluster with other Māori services rather than with non-Immersion services. The supervisor of this centre felt that their progress had been held back as the provider had to pitch aspects of the PD at a lower level to meet the needs of the other services in the cluster:

I don't believe we are getting everything the provider has to offer. I feel cheated! The provider is expected to support mainstream centres to reach minimum standards. Many Pākehā teachers and centres feel threatened by the work on Te Whatu Pokeka. The focus should be on funding the provider to work solely with Māori centres, to achieve Māori success, supporting Māori to access knowledge that will make a real difference, rather than supporting minor shifts in Pākehā centres.

Chapter summary: Increasing services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture

Level 1: Participants' learning

- **How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?**

- **How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?**

Data from the online survey and case study components of the evaluation suggest variation in the extent to which providers actively addressed how services could increase their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture: collectively just over three-quarters of responding services (77.8%) felt that their programme had supported them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' to be more responsive with those from programme one and programme one plus two and/or three somewhat more positive than those participating only in programme two and/or three. Case study data revealed that some programmes appeared to have paid little attention to these aspects, some programmes had helped services to strengthen existing practices to a moderate extent, and some programmes had combined with services' commitment and existing practices, resulting in some powerful outcomes. Where providers did actively work with services to increase their responsiveness, the degree of shift in participants' learning was influenced by their existing knowledge and openness to new learning in these areas. Learning for participants from Immersion Māori and Pasifika was influenced by the ability of their provider to deliver the programme in culturally appropriate ways.

Where providers have addressed responsiveness to children's identity, culture and language, participants' learning has often been attitudinal as well as in terms of increased knowledge: services have focused on building relationships and partnerships with families and in strengthening teachers' ability to be culturally responsive in their interactions with children and families. There has also been a shift with services asking individual families how their culture and language play out for them rather than relying on more general, and at times stereotypical, understandings of other cultures.

Level 2: Organisational and structural support

- **How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?**

- **How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?**

Providers reported using a wide range of approaches and strategies to support services in being more responsive to children's identity, language and culture. Successful approaches included preparing facilitators carefully to work with services on these aspects, using the rubrics as a tool to open up conversations about how the service is responsive to Māori and Pasifika children, incorporating a focus on identity, language and culture within the self-review processes, using a range of resources such as *Taitiako*, the *Pasifika Plan*, *Te Whatu Pokeka* and *Ka Hikitia* as well as Education Review Office national reports, and supporting services to build links with and knowledge of mana whenua.

At times, external events (such as the Rugby World Cup) facilitated increased responsiveness by services. Although external to the PD programmes, providers did use such events as an opportunity to challenge services to think about how they could build new-found understandings and appreciation of cultural pride into their practices.

Three aspects of service capability appeared to influence whether services became more responsive to children's identity, language and culture: firstly, the impact of leaders within the

service who, when committed to developing practice in this area, drove change through in the service; secondly, the need for specific knowledge about New Zealand's bi-cultural heritage and the role of the Treaty of Waitangi, and thirdly, gaps in teachers' existing assessment knowledge to effectively document children's learning and their own practices.

The structure of the current PD contracts does not differentiate between the PD needs of Māori and Pasifika Immersion services and those services who may have high Māori and Pasifika participation but which do not operate from a kaupapa Māori or Pasifika philosophy. There was evidence from the case studies and online survey that Māori and Pasifika Immersion services do not always feel that their specialised PD needs are met, despite the best efforts of providers. Different skills and knowledge are required for PD that supports non-immersion services to develop in areas such as te reo me ngā tikanga and cultural responsiveness versus the specialised expertise required for working with kaupapa Māori and immersion services.

Level 3: Participants' use of new skills and knowledge

- **How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?**

- **How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?**

Extensive examples were given by providers and respondents to the online survey of how services had increased their responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture – these ranged from modest (at times, rather tokenistic) changes to significant shifts in practice. More than three-quarters (78.5%) of services felt that their PD programme had supported them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' to be more responsive – a key feature of shifts in practice is an increase in teachers' willingness to proactively engage with families rather than relying on families to approach them. Analysis of examples given of shifts in practice revealed several key themes including: building stronger relationships with families and children from diverse backgrounds; actively asking parents for information about their family's cultural practices and finding ways to involve families authentically in the service; incorporating their increased understandings into their assessment, documentation and planning processes; using multiple lenses to reflect on their practices; changing environments and resources to reflect cultural and linguistic diversity within the service; increasing their use of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori in the programme; reflecting multicultural diversity within the programme; encouraging children and families to use home languages in the service; and supporting children and families for whom English is an additional language.

As noted above, case study data noted variations in the apparent inclusion of a focus on children's identity, language and culture in PD programmes and in the practices within services. In those services where providers had explicitly focused on being responsive to identity, language and culture, evaluators found evidence of shifts in practice through their environmental and document analysis (particularly when examining examples of children's portfolios that demonstrated shifts in practice) and interviews with parents and whānau. Teacher reports and the collection of vignettes gathered during the site visits provide supporting evidence of shifts in practice.

Level 4: Outcomes for children

- **How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?**

- **How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?**

As noted above, there are extensive examples across the provider interviews, online survey and case studies of how services have become more responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture. Most of these examples do not explicitly link to outcomes for children but positive outcomes can be inferred. For example, children have seen their cultures and home languages reflected and valued within services, and have been encouraged to use their home languages and share their cultural practices. In forming stronger relationships with parents and encouraging involvement in the service, children are likely to have experienced closer links between the service and home, and have been given opportunities to participate in community cultural events. As teachers have sought information from families about children's lives outside the service, they have got to know children better and are more likely to be able to draw on children's existing funds of knowledge (Hedges, 2007).

Chapter 6: Results: Engagement in Professional Development

This chapter addresses the third overarching evaluation question, *In what ways has the targeted approach resulted in services being involved and engaged in PD?* It presents data from the document analyses, provider interviews, online survey, case studies, and telephone interviews with organisations and individuals in the targeted communities to answer the following two evaluation questions:

- How effective have the PD providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?

- What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?

The chapter concludes with a summary of the key results using the four levels of the evaluation analytical framework.

Evaluation Question 8: How effective have the PD providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Analyses of the provider milestone reports indicate that regional MoE personnel were the most frequently referred to stakeholders, with all but one provider identifying additional stakeholders. These included: MoE national office advisors; Group Special Education; other PD providers; principals' associations; home-based services; schools; iwi; Māori organisations; B4 School nurses; Pasifika trusts; Pasifika church groups; ERO; Plunket; Professional Service Managers; Learning Media; local councils; and university lecturers.

There was little evidence of the effectiveness of these working relationships although some providers seemed to have established on-going relationships with, for example, schools involved in transition to school clusters. One provider noted that PD meetings have been held in school staffrooms as a result of visits by facilitators to local schools, and had also used lecturers to provide expertise in various content areas.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

During their interviews, providers were asked which organisations they had established and maintained relationships with in order to better meet the PD needs of local ECE services, within the regions they were working in. In addition, providers were asked how they made decisions on which organisations to work with.

Providers referred most frequently to developing and maintaining relationships with the local MoE offices. The quality of relationship between the providers and the local MoE office appears critical within the context of a targeted approach to PD delivery. Whilst most providers spoke very positively of the relationship that they had developed with colleagues in their local MoE offices, it is clearly a relationship that requires on-going effort and communication, particularly when dealing with services causing concern. For example, a breach of confidentiality in one such situation had caused difficulties for a provider trying to work with the service. Provider-Ministry relationships were maintained and strengthened through regular meetings and discussions about services within the targeted communities.

The on-going re-licensing of ECE services was identified by some providers as an opportunity to lift the quality of ECE provision. One provider highlighted the impact of this process when it occurred alongside (or just prior to) the PD programmes that they were delivering. In some areas, the provider had been able to work very closely with MoE officials to have a unified voice. In such instances, facilitators felt supported when working with services that were resistant to change. However, the same provider noted that it was difficult to challenge services about their practices, such as overly formal preparation for school activities, when contrary messages had been received from MoE officials or from ERO.

Relationships were established with different stakeholders in direct response to the focus of the PD programmes. For example, seven providers described establishing and maintaining relationships with local primary schools as part of their transition to school programmes. In some instances these developed into strong, on-going relationships: one facilitator described how she set up liaison meetings that involved local schools' junior teachers and assistant principals and all the ECE services that fed into those schools. These had developed into on-going cluster groups with changes in practice evident in both the ECE services and the schools, including one assistant principal undertaking further study in early childhood: "… our last end-of-year meeting … when we were in the early childhood centre, and just hearing her talk because she'd done this play paper, unbelievable! It was like 'Oh wow' and of course because she was the AP that fed to her teachers".

Providers identified that they had developed and maintained relationships with a number of umbrella organisations, related to the services enrolled in their programmes, including local kindergarten associations (5), Barnardos (2), Kidicorp (4), ABC (1) and REAP (2). Providers routinely sent copies of emails and other communications to keep the Professional Service Managers in these umbrella organisations in the loop about the work they were doing with their services. Relationships were also established with church organisations and trustee groups responsible for Pasifika and Māori immersion services respectively.

Providers also took opportunities to participate in local networks established for various purposes. For example, one provider who had developed a strong relationship with their local special education services found that this led to membership of:

> …a group that's called Vulnerable Infants Action Group and what that does is in the [location] area, it encompasses strengthening families, health care services, Plunket, CYFS, [location] Community Centre and Whānau Ora. And what we're focusing on is bringing people like [name] to the [location], which we did a month ago, and there were 305 teachers went and heard his message. So we're working closely with them, just to maintain those relationships and work with them.

Providers engaged with a wide range of other local networks and organisations in their regions including: regional ECE network groups; Child, Youth and Family; school attendance programmes; COMET (City of Manukau Education Trust); Sport Manawatu; university academics; Pasifika Community group fono; Learning Media (in relation to school transitions); health organisations such as Plunket; and OMEP. Providers noted that the development of these relationships assisted them in developing understanding of the local communities, especially where they were delivering PD in new regions. Facilitators' existing relationships with other organisations in their local communities often provided the initial connection for developing a relationship with the provider's PD programmes. This was especially evident for some providers in terms of their relationships with local iwi and hāpu. One provider noted that a particular strength was that they were mana whenua in the regions within which they worked and thus they were able to draw on local knowledge to support services to be responsive to children's language, culture and identities.

One provider identified that a local district council had developed an education plan. The provider regularly attended meetings of the council's education group:

> …and we will report to the council education group again later on in the project to let them know what we've been doing in their area with their services in their community, with some examples. Hopefully, we might take some of those centres.

Some providers used their networks and relationships to reduce duplication of activities. For example, one director described how she "said to the Ministry person, are you running anything about Pasifika education in [location], rather than us do it, are you doing it? You've got the networks…rather than us both doing stuff". Providers also used their knowledge of other organisations and networks to direct services to avoid duplication, and took an active role in helping services find out about local organisations and networks in their own communities: "We get the book out, Yellow Pages, do a bit of a search, this is the name, these are the sorts of questions, not doing it for them."

ONLINE SURVEY

Several questions in the online survey of participating ECE services addressed aspects of the relationships developed between the provider, ECE services and other organisations as a result of the PD programmes.

We were interested in services' perceptions about the ability of their PD provider to develop a relationship with them and to support services to develop relationships with other organisations in their communities. Table 6.1 presents data on these two questions. In total, 93.7% of responding services felt that their PD provider had been 'Very effective' or 'Effective' in building a relationship with their service in order to address their PD needs.

When considered by their programme type, respondents who had participated in programmes two and/or three were slightly more positive (96.8%) than those who had participated in programme one only (90.1%) or in programme one plus programme two and/or three (94.1%). The further through their programme services were, the more likely they were to rate their provider's ability to build effective relationships: 82.4% of services who had just started their programme rated their provider as 'Effective' or 'Very effective' compared with 90.9% of services who were in the middle of their programme and 96.9% of services who had just finished, finished a while ago or had started a second round of PD. Each group of services were more likely to rate their provider as 'Very effective' rather than as 'Effective'.

Table 6.1:   Service perceptions of providers' ability to build effective relationships

	Very effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective	Total
Building a relationship with YOUR service in order to address your PD needs?	93 (58.5%)	56 (35.2%)	7 (4.4%)	3 (1.8%)	159
Helping YOU to build relationships with stakeholders and other ECE services in your community?	43 (27.4%)	79 (50.3%)	30 (19.1%)	5 (3.3%)	157

Fewer services (77.7%) felt that their provider had been 'Very effective' or 'Effective' in helping the service to build relationships with stakeholders and other ECE services within their community. Very little difference was apparent when results are considered by programme enrolment: 76.6% of programme one only respondents, 77.4% of programme two and/or three respondents, and 79.4% of programme one plus programme two and/or three respondents felt their provider had been 'Very effective' or 'Effective' in helping them to build relationships with stakeholders and other ECE services.

How far through their programme services were influenced whether they felt their provider had been effective in helping them to build such relationships – 64.7% of services at the beginning of their programme, 75% of services in the middle and 81% of services who had just finished,

had finished a while ago or had started a second round of PD felt their provider had been 'Very effective' or 'Effective'. In contrast to the previous question, services in each of these groups were more likely to rate their provider as 'Effective', rather than 'Very effective'.

Services were asked whether eight listed factors supported or inhibited the development of an effective relationship with their PD provider; services were also given the opportunity to identify any other factors that they felt had influenced their relationship (see Table 6.2).

Table 6.2: **Influence of factors on providers' effectiveness in developing relationship with services**

Factors	Supported provider's effectiveness	Was a barrier to provider's effectiveness	Did not influence provider's effectiveness	Total
Facilitator ability to listen carefully to our views about our PD needs	124 79.5%	17 10.9%	15 9.6%	156
Facilitator's degree of cultural competence	110 71.9%	10 6.5%	33 21.6%	153
Prior knowledge of our service	103 67.3%	13 8.5%	37 24.2%	153
Availability of time for the facilitator to get to know us	101 65.6%	35 22.7%	18 11.7%	154
Access to our facilitator when we needed him/her	96 63.2%	27 17.8%	29 19%	152
Stability of staff within our team	91 60.7%	23 15.3%	36 24%	150
Stability of staff within the facilitator's team	85 57%	10 6.7%	54 36.2%	149
Geographical area covered by our facilitator	75 50.3%	28 18.8%	46 30.9%	149
Other factors (please specify)	9 36%	4 16%	12 48%	25

Two factors were rated very highly by services as having supported the provider's effectiveness in developing a relationship with the service: *the facilitator's ability to listen carefully to the service's views about their PD needs* (79.5%) and *the facilitator's degree of cultural competence* (71.9%). When considered by programme type more respondents who had completed programme one plus programme two and/or three rated the former factor as supporting the provider's effectiveness (90.6%) than did respondents who completed only programme one (78%) or programme two and/or three (75%). The further through their programme respondents were, the more important this factor became: 70.1% of those at the beginning of their programme, 72.1% of those mid-way through their programme and 84.2% of those almost at the end, recently completed or started a second round of PD. Similar results were evident for the facilitator's degree of cultural competence with respondents who were in programme one plus programme two and/or three (83.9%) rating this factor more highly than

those in programme one (67.2%) or programmes two and/or three (69.8%). Relatively little difference was evident between respondents at different stages of their programme.

Over all the responding services, other factors rated relatively highly were having prior knowledge of the service (67.3%), the availability of time for the facilitator to get to know the service (65.6%) and services having access to their facilitator when they needed him or her (64.4%). Having prior knowledge of the service was much more important for services in programme two and/or three (73.4%) or in programme one plus programme two and/or three (71%) than for services enrolled in programme one (57.9%). The availability of time for the facilitator to get to know the service was more important for respondents in programme one (67.8%) and programme one plus programme two and/or three (74.2%) than for respondents in programmes two and/or three (58.7%). Having prior knowledge of the service became increasingly important the further through their programme respondents were: whilst only 50% of respondents at the beginning of their programme rated this as a factor, 65.1% of those midway through and 71% of those nearly at the end, just finished or had started another round of PD felt that this factor was important.

Although the numbers of services who saw any of these factors as barriers were low overall, three factors did rate quite highly as barriers to providers being able to develop an effective relationship with the service: *availability of time for the facilitator to get to know the service* (22.7%), *the geographical area covered by the facilitator* (18.8%) and *access to the facilitator when needed* (17.8%). The *availability of time for the facilitator to get to know the service* was much more of a barrier for services completing programmes two and/or three (27%) than for services completing programme one (20.3%) or programme one plus programme two and/or three (19.4%). In contrast, and perhaps unsurprisingly, the *geographical distance covered by the facilitator* and *access to the facilitator* were much more likely to be barriers for participants in programme one (22.8%; 24.1% respectively) and programme one plus programme two and/or three (25%; 21.9%) respondents than it was for programme two and/or three respondents (11.7%; 9.7%). Respondents at the beginning of their programme identified that *availability of time for the facilitator to get to know them* (43.8%), *access to their facilitator* when needed (31.2%) and *prior knowledge of their service* (25%) were the greatest barriers. Those mid-way through their programme identified that the *geographical area covered by their facilitator* (28.6%) and the *availability of time for the facilitator to get to know them* (20.9%) were the greatest barriers to establishing a relationship. Those nearing the end of their programme, who had completed or who had started another round of PD tended not to see these factors as barriers – the highest reported barrier was *availability of time for the facilitator to get to know them* (20.2%).

Eleven respondents made additional comments about factors that supported or limited the development of an effective relationship between themselves and their PD provider. Positive comments highlighted the congruency between the facilitator's background and the service's philosophy and the expertise and experience that the facilitators had to offer. One respondent acknowledged that the services itself also influenced the quality of the relationship:

> Sometimes the ability of the centre to contribute well – we were going through an ERO review and a redundancy process at the time, the facilitator was very supportive and helped us complete our project as our time and energy were limited and we were operating under stress

Five services made less positive comments, several of which centred on the availability of the facilitator (overworked, went on leave, committed to services in other geographical locations). One service commented that "the relationship was totally ineffective - they had their own goals and their own agenda/targets they wanted to meet. Frankly they weren't interested in our needs or goals" whilst another noted that there was nothing wrong with the facilitator but "it would be more effective if she was able to communicate in Samoan".

Services were asked to indicate, from a fixed response list, who they talked with now about their ECE practices and children's learning that they didn't talk to prior to their PD programme (see Table 6.3). One hundred and thirty-nine services responded to this question with other EC services (70%) and primary school teachers and principals (49%) being the most frequently identified groups they talked with about their practices and children's learning outside of their service. Across the other listed personnel and organisations, fairly similar results were apparent from 22% reporting that they now talked with special education services through to 9% now talking with Māori organisations. Respondents were asked to identify the organisations that they now talked with, from the following: special education services, health organisations, online discussion groups, social service organisations, Māori organisations, and any other groups that they interacted with as a result of their PD programme not already identified in the list.

Table 6.3:   Who services talk with as a result of PD

Outside organisations and personnel	Number	Percentage
Other ECE services	97	70%
Primary schools teachers/principals	68	49%
Special education services	31	22%
Health organisations	27	19%
Local iwi or hapu	25	18%
Outside experts (e.g., visiting academics)	25	18%
Local cultural community groups	23	17%
Online discussion groups	22	16%
Social service organisations	18	13%
Kaumatua, kuia	16	12%
Local churches	15	11%
Māori organisations	13	9%
Other people or organisations	28	20%

When considered by programme type, relatively similar results were apparent for other ECE services (66–73%), primary schools teachers and principals (43–51%), iwi and hāpu (16–23%) and social services (11–15%). Respondents from programme one plus programme two and/or three were more likely to be talking with kaumatua or kuia, community cultural groups and health organisations than respondents from other programme groups whilst respondents from programme one were more likely to talk with Māori organisations, although overall numbers were low. Not surprisingly, respondents from programmes two or three indicated that they now talked with outside experts or with online discussion groups more than did respondents from other programme groups. When considered by the length of time that respondents had been in their PD programme, in most instances the longer a service had been in their programme, the more likely they were to be talking with other people and groups. Significant increases were apparent for talking with other ECE services (from 38% up to 77%) and health organisations (from 0% to 22%). However, services were less likely to talk with Māori organisations (15% down to 7%) and outside experts (23% down to 19%) the further through their programme they were.

Across all respondents, nineteen services specifically identified the special education organisations that they now worked with: 14 identified Special Education Services (at times using a different nomenclature) with three others identifying specific practitioners within the organisation such as early intervention teachers and education support workers. One identified

organisations that sat outside the Special Education Service, such as CCS and the Ohomairangi Trust, one identified the *Incredible Years* programme, and one identified "supporting emotional literacy".

Seventeen services identified a range of health organisations and personnel, including public health organisations such as the Waitemata DHB (1) and their services: child development teams (1), public health nurses and workers (2), paediatricians (1), dental nurses and hearing and vision testers (1). Local initiatives such as Waikids (1), the West Fono (2), Health Star Pacific (2) and an early childhood hub (1) were identified. Services identified Plunket (4), B4 Five school checks (2) and the Health Heart programme (1). Other programmes less easily identified included "Pasefika" (1) and "swpis" (1).

Eleven services identified online groups that they participated in. Most of these groups were associated with a PD provider: CORE (2), ELP (3) and Playcentre Federation Facebook (2). One referred to the BLENNZ development site whilst the remaining four were unspecific.

Twelve services also identified social services organisations that they now worked with as a result of their PD programme. Whilst seven named specific organisations such as CYPS, WASSTB, Tatou West Harbour Group, Salvation Army Food bank, Plunket, Lifewise Trust, Te Roopu Awhina, and Taeaomanino Trust the remaining responses were less specific such as "social workers" and "family support".

Ten services listed Māori organisations they now talked to: of these, two listed their PD provider (Te Kopu) and another the Māori organisation within their local Playcentre Association. Three identified local iwi or urban organisations and two identified local marae and Kohanga reo. One service noted they were "about to have a session with other centres" whilst one noted that they had been unsuccessful in establishing a relationship with the local Māori community since the centre opened five years ago.

Twenty-six respondents listed individuals or organisations under "other": these were a mix of PD providers (5), other ECE practitioners, services or organisations (12), primary schools (1) and organisations such as the police (1), Heart Foundation (2), and Plunket (1). One named specific people, one identified their Māori Education Support Worker, and one identified a private team building company.

In order to get a sense of the sustainability of these newly developed relationships, we then asked respondents to identify which of the following external people and organisations their service intended to continue engaging with after their PD programme was completed. One hundred and fifty services responded to this question (see Table 6.4).

Table 6.4:   Who services intend to continue engaging with after PD programme is completed

Outside organisations and personnel	Response	Percentage
Colleagues in other ECE services	124	83%
Primary school teachers/principals	87	58%
Special education services	66	44%
Health organisations	62	41%
Social service organisations	49	33%
Local iwi or hāpu	47	31%
Local cultural community groups	47	31%
Online discussion groups	33	22%
Māori organisations	31	21%
Kaumatua, kuia	30	20%
Local churches	21	14%
Others	22	15%

There was a greater response to this question than the preceding one, suggesting that many services had developed relationships with other individuals and organisations in their communities independently of their PD programme. For each category identified there were a greater proportion of services who responded that they would keep talking to organisations after the conclusion of their PD programmes, between 3% and 22% greater than the responses to the earlier question. Whilst this suggests that these relationships are valued by services, the influence of the PD programmes on this cannot be determined.

When responses are considered by programme type, mixed results were apparent: a greater proportion of services enrolled only in programme one indicated that they would continue talking with school teachers and principals, iwi and hāpu, community and cultural groups and Māori organisations. Services enrolled in a combination of programme one plus programme two and/or three indicated they intended to continue talking to health organisations, social organisations and churches to a greater extent than did those enrolled only in a single programme. Unsurprisingly, given the PD delivery mode, more services enrolled in programme two and/or three or in programme one plus programme two and/or three indicated that they intended to continue talking with others in online discussion groups.

A pattern of increased intentions to continue talking with others as they progressed through their PD programme was evident for several of the identified groups: talking with other ECE services rose from 57–87%, for schools from 43–60%, for social services from 14–36% and for churches from 7–15%. Fewer services at the end of their PD programme intended to continue talking with SES services than those at the beginning or mid-point (down from 50% to 40%). Of interest was that a drop-off in intentions to keep talking to some groups occurred between those in the middle to those at the end of their programme: health services dropped from 45% to 41%, community cultural groups from 40% to 29%, Māori organisations from 24% to 22%, and online discussion groups from 31% to 16%. Whilst the number of responding services in some categories is relatively small (and thus need to be treated cautiously), these results may reflect the challenges of maintaining relationships once the external motivation and support of the PD provider is removed.

Twenty services made comments under the 'Other' category. Whilst many of these mirrored responses to the earlier question (particularly relationships with other ECE individuals, services or organisations (5) or PD providers (6)), one commented that "We have developed these links with no professional development provision. We are an integrated family centre model catering for 160 families. We have managed these networks ourselves without any assistance from our Professional Development provider". In contrast, another responded that "We are a rural Preschool and sometimes have difficulty finding the costs to attend Professional Development from outside agencies. We therefore rely on Ministry Professional Development to help us".

CASE STUDIES

The site visits included interviews with teachers, either individually or in groups, as convenient for the teaching teams. Amongst the schedule of questions, teachers were asked if there had been shifts in their relationships with other organisations within their community or changes in enrolment patterns of families, as a result of their PD programme. Responses to these questions were gained from 12 of the 16 case study services. Site evaluators also looked for evidence of shifts in relationships in the environmental and document analyses undertaken during the site visit.

Some services felt that there had been no real change in their relationships with other stakeholders in their community as a result of their PD programme. In other instances, it was not always possible to determine whether the engagement that the ECE service had with the wider community was as a result of the PD programme or because of the internal capability of the service. For example, in three services there was extensive evidence of community engagement – one of these services also had a very active and dynamic leader. This person

identified that the service had become more active in reaching out to the local community including, for example, the schools that children transitioned into.

Where changes have occurred as a result of the PD programmes, these appear to be qualitative changes on a number of levels. For most services, the most significant change was in relation to the development and strengthening of their relationships with: other services, schools, special education services, parents and whānau, and local iwi. In the latter situation, teachers identified that the PD had been very successful in helping them find out about local dialects and stories. The provider had the contacts and had arranged their visits to important sites within their community.

The establishment of a cluster group focused on transition to school and involving a number of primary schools and ECE services was viewed by two services as significant in establishing relationships and increasing understandings between the ECE and school sectors. One teacher (whose views were reiterated by other members of her team) commented:

> The most influential factors to the above changes was that they had opportunities to come together to make connections and further relationships. It was a wonderful opportunity as because of the interest being made by the local kindergartens then the primary schools came on board and made it a great focus of their own. There was a particular teacher at one of the local schools who was currently studying her Masters in transitions and so was an abundance of help in developing and implementing new aspects. These all contributed to more professional dialogue and more planning to ensure seamless transitions between all of the environments.

In another situation a service noted that the strong relationship that they already had with their local special education service was enhanced as a result of their PD programme. The evaluator's summary noted that:

> However it did help with the parent relationships as whilst these were strong, the Manager feels that they lacked a professional element, particularly in regards to discussion of children's learning and development outcomes. Whilst the PD did not affect their enrolment patterns it did affect the way in which they enrol children, through changing documents to better suit the identities and personalities of the children and their families entering the service.

A Pasifika centre had increased their liaison and work with other Pasifika services in the wider community, building upon the extensive engagement that the centre already had with local agencies and groups within their community. A service involved with a national programme cluster group identified that they already had existing good relationships with other local ECE services whilst noting that they had developed increased knowledge and skill in being able to engage with other services online. A home-based network commented that their engagement in a transition to school cluster had been most useful for building awareness of others' practices and confidence in their own practices as home-based providers.

Finally, another Pasifika centre had developed very strong relationships with other Pasifika services in their community as a result of participating in their cluster PD programme. Teachers described how they met with the other services weekly to share their PD journeys, and their intentions for shared celebrations such as White Sunday and graduations for children leaving for school. As a result of the PD work, teachers in this centre felt more confident in sharing their ideas with teachers from other centres and had been invited to present at a PD symposium their provider was holding at the end of the year.

External organisation telephone interviews

The evaluation plan included a component in the case study protocol for site evaluators to identify and contact external organisations and stakeholders in the community within which the ECE service was located in order to get a sense of how effectively the provider had built relationships with these stakeholders. Unfortunately, it became evident during the case study

site visits that individuals spoken to did not always know which organisations and stakeholders their provider had worked with in their community. Provider interviews (which had been undertaken prior to the case study component) were then scanned for examples of stakeholders that we could approach for a telephone interview. Again, this proved somewhat problematic as in many instances providers had referred to stakeholders in generic terms (for example, stating they had worked with schools or with Whānau Ora providers without identifying specifics). Officials from three MoE regional offices (a fourth interview was unable to be set up as the official with responsibility for that region was unavailable due to unavoidable circumstances) and representatives from nine organisations were interviewed by telephone. Organisations included seven umbrella organisations, one special education service representative, and one community organisation. Not all providers were able to be covered by organisations beyond the MoE.

External organisations were asked, firstly, about the interactions that they had had with the provider(s) in their areas. All identified that mostly strong relationships had been developed between the provider and their organisation. Contact varied from a few times a week to weekly in most cases. A few cases had daily contact with the providers whilst others only made contact once or twice a year. Contact was established predominately through phone calls and emails; however where the organisation and provider were locally based, face-to-face meetings were a regular occurrence. Nearly all the organisations had larger meetings annually (up to three times).

Providers had held preliminary meetings with most of the organisations to share their expectations of and values about the PD programmes, for example, their values on identity, family and culture. Organisations had found that when these values were addressed in the PD programmes they were more successful as they supported the organisation and the services' own philosophies. On-going communication meant that organisations were able to advocate for families and their own organisations. There was variance in the extent to which providers shared information with organisations after sessions and hui.

Relationships were not just developed on a formal level: in some cases a personal relationship was developed or had already been established and this was helpful in strengthening the relationship further. Only one organisation found it difficult to make contact with their PD provider's facilitator who was often late to or missed meetings or did not answer emails. They did note outstanding involvement when the facilitator was present.

Organisations were asked how useful they had found their interactions with their provider(s). In most cases the response was "very useful". Frequently, this was because organisations were able to better understand the community, context and the families through the responses of the PD providers. Other points made by organisations included:

- Feeling that their own expectations and needs were being better met through their interactions.

- That the results of the PD programmes were better for parents and children when there was match between the values of the PD and organisations.

- New services had been established on occasion to meet community needs.

- Some providers were outstanding and went beyond their requirements to really involve the organisations in what they are doing.

- Most organisations could see a significant shift in the confidence and practices of the services, teachers and themselves at times. This meant that parents had become more involved in their children's learning along with the wider community.

- Cluster team and in-centre PD were both seen to be highly effective.

- The only negative comment made was that what PD providers claim to have taught or encouraged has not always been seen in the services – there is a strong difference between action and what the teachers claim they know.

When services were asked how they felt providers could work more effectively with their organisation to address the PD needs of services in their communities, a range of issues were raised. Sustaining consistent change was seen by some organisations as a challenge, especially when providers were working with a large number of services over large geographical regions. Continuing to build communication between providers and external organisations was identified as important, particularly when organisations could see a mismatch between services' and providers' reports of progress. To help improve communication, one organisation suggested that providers supply regular milestone reports to them. While some organisations were keen that contracts stayed with existing providers who they felt understood the needs of their services well, one organisation suggested that there needed to be a larger focus on Pasifika settings and a shift in perception around their value in EC education.

Finally, organisations were asked if they had any other comments to make. Most responded that the providers were very personable, friendly and eager to help, and were quick to answer emails or respond to calls. One organisation noted that the rubrics were really useful but suggested that they needed further development and use to help educators and teachers understand each point. Finally, one organisation hoped the MoE would continue to resource and prioritise PD, suggesting the following areas to focus on: leadership and management; developing community partnerships; and strengthening bicultural and Pasifika competence and success.

Evaluation Question 9. What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Most providers worked closely with local MoE personnel to identify services in their designated areas. A wide range of strategies were used to contact and recruit services, including email, mail, telephone and visits. Often visits were made after initial contact by phone or email. Umbrella organisations were worked with in order to identify target services, and local networks and community gatherings were used to recruit services.

Face-to-face conversations were seen as critical to involvement and engagement by one provider who personally visited all eligible services or service providers when setting up their programme. This provider used questionnaires to gather baseline information, developing wananga focus areas from this information. Wananga attendance was supported by in-centre work and seminar presentations. Phone calls replaced personal visits in the second year of the contract. Other providers visited all high priority services and invited all services in their region to participate in seminars.

Other providers began with cluster meetings where information about the programme and nature of the professional learning and development relationship was shared. Services were visited soon after the cluster meetings and data collected related to the chosen focus.

The national programmes were advertised in the Education Gazette and on the providers' websites; providers offering programme one PD also used their websites to encourage participation.

Not all milestone reports provided sufficient information to determine what approaches were used to successfully involve and engage services. Needs analyses as an initial approach appeared to be used in most cases but their success was not discussed.

The importance of building trusting relationships with services was noted by a number of providers. Some services required intensive one-on-one support before they were willing to work with other services and share their practice more widely. Flexibility in provision was also important for involvement and engagement as providers who were able to tailor their approach to the service needs and context were able to be more responsive than those who had a fixed model of delivery.

Variation in planned PD delivery occurred for a variety of reasons including: inability to cluster services because of variance in capabilities; illness of facilitators; cancellation of meetings; and Christchurch earthquakes.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

Providers were asked four questions about the approaches that they had used to involve and engage services in their PD programmes:

- What approaches and strategies have you used to involve and engage services in your PD programmes? How have these evolved over the period of the contract to date?

- What particular challenges and successes have you experienced that have influenced service engagement in your PD programmes?

- Have you identified services within your target regions who have not engaged in a PD programme when invited? What are your perspectives on why some services have not become involved?

- What influence have the professional leaders within services had on their services becoming and staying engaged in PD?

Many providers referred specifically to the local MoE office's input in determining which communities and services were to be targeted in the delivery of programmes. One provider noted that some services were directed by the Ministry to engage in PD with the provider, whilst another commented about the MoE's advice on which services to target:

> …they also identified Phase 1, Phase 2 so the ones, they identified the ones we should go to first at the beginning, pretty much 2011 and they were right, they were bang on…this is a pattern we've found, the services that particularly [name] identified for sort of coming on board in the second half, their inquiry's up and running much quicker, their capacity as a centre is much further down the track.

All providers used multiple strategies to engage services in their programmes. Strategies that enabled personal contact, such as phone calls and visits to services, were found to be particularly effective in explaining the targeted approach to the PD programmes. One provider ran a series of information evenings in approximately fifteen different locations:

> …basically laying the contract out there, so there were no surprises. Because of the new things, like the rubrics and the real tight connection to the regs with language, culture, identity, all those sorts of things, we thought we would send an invitation out to everyone and invite them in and we did that in pockets so we had clusters.

Information about programmes was sent out by email and post; several providers also left information with services when they visited so that managers and team leaders had material to share with their staff. Those providers who offered cost-recovery PD programmes outside the contracts or who offered seminar programmes to services more widely within programme one used these as a mechanism for engaging new services into their in-depth or cluster programmes. Providers also worked with national organisations, umbrella organisations and services' governing bodies to encourage engagement.

Providers of the two national programmes used a variety of additional approaches including advertising through the Gazette and on their own websites, and calling for expressions of interest or applications from interested services.

A key theme in providers' responses about how they *successfully* engaged and involved services in their programmes focused on their active building of relationships with services. One provider noted that "relationships were the key" whilst another highlighted that building effective relationships was particularly important when working with services with high numbers of Māori and Pasifika team members. One provider's description of how they introduced themselves to the services indicated how much effort went into developing relationships with services:

> Initially … we went and talked to the local MoE officers to find out the locations and I … went through the ERO reports of each centre. Just so I got an idea of what the centres were about, where they were located, their licenses...once I had that then a letter of invitation was sent out to each service explaining who we were then inviting them into the programme… that was before I made a phone call with them to have a hui with them, then after that hui they could decide whether or not to take up the programme... So once we talked with them I then left so they could discuss it as a team, but I had all the information from them as to what they wanted and then we set up another appointment.

Providers' strategies have evolved somewhat as the PD programmes move into phase two: less of the intensive "big scoping" work is required and individual specific services are being targeted with personal approaches.

Successes in engaging services in PD programmes

Analysis of the provider interview data reveals several aspects that influence whether services are successfully engaged in the PD programmes. First, the targeted approach is enabling improved access to PD for those services that "might not have got around to applying" under the previous PD programme approaches. Second, targeting management as part of the engagement process increases some services' likelihood of successfully engaging in PD programmes: "what we have found is that when managers are on board, the whole team are on board. When managers don't come in and send some of their team it all falls to bits". Third, providers have become adept at using consultative approaches with services to determine their PD priorities and then working to weave these into the MoE PD focus areas: "when [person] gathered all the data we then started sorting priorities, and it was really interesting that a lot of what they saw as priorities we could actually sort them under the focus areas. We could reorganize them under the focus areas. And we did a grid based on those focus areas and anything else that they wanted but there wasn't much that sat outside of those". Fourth, providers found that using a face-to-face personal approach was particularly helpful for engaging with Pasifika services: "we had a large number who weren't engaging and so one of our [Pasifika] facilitators went… and saw them and met with them face to face and then they all came on board". Fifth, working with national or umbrella organisations improved service engagement in programmes. Finally, some providers used an appreciative inquiry model for their programmes that acknowledged existing strengths in service and teacher practices:

> So each centre undertakes an initial needs analysis type of event with the facilitator where they are likely to do a SWOT analysis or a PMI or some sort of process around what is working well in this place, and where they would like to strengthen and then we see where that sits with the Ministry focus areas as opposed to the other way around…following an appreciative inquiry process. Not focusing on what's not working in the centres…[focusing on a] credit based approach, evaluating each group for who they are, the culture of their centre, their community, where they are at as a group and then building on that.

Providers of the two national programmes identified several elements of their programmes that were successfully engaging services. Engagement was monitored through: i) enrolments in face-to-face workshops and inspiration days and in online webinars and ii) hits on individual web-pages, including video resources, reflective questions and discussion groups with specific data provided on average numbers of hits per month. One provider noted:

> …a lot of activity we know that goes on in the background because we've got the capacity to look at the stats and we report on that. I often look at it because we have discussion

groups and things like that; there's not a lot of people active and contributing but I also look at that as a bit like the iceberg, there's some people who are comfortable about contributing but there's also a whole lot of people in the back of that that you can't see. We've got stats about how many people are accessing the site and which particular pages they're going to and which resources, so we know there are people there.

Whilst most discussion groups in the national programmes were open access, one provider had also set up some private blog sites for cluster groups within their national programme to encourage services within those clusters to contribute more actively online.

Challenges in engaging services in PD programmes

Providers identified a number of challenges faced in engaging services in their PD programmes, including aspects that were external to the services as well as internal service factors. The implementation of the new targeted PD approach involved introducing new requirements to services and, for some providers, building relationships with targeted services in areas the provider had not worked in before. Maintaining the relational dimensions between the provider and the service was noted by an experienced provider: "the challenge is probably maintaining those relational dimensions of the project and caring about [the] whole, people and services holistically within the tight kind of parameters of the project". Travel for facilitators was a challenge for some providers as large geographical regions to cover meant facilitators could not always be as flexible as they would like in meeting services' needs. Providers also referred to services undergoing other activities such as re-licensing or an ERO review that diverted their attention away from their PD programmes. One provider commented:

> There has been a lot happening for centres out there at the moment such as the relicensing process. It has had quite a significant impact on the number of centres and because our centres are all volunteers, if they had something like the relicensing process to work through then often, some of those centres said to us, come back in 6 months time when we have done this, we can't do more than one thing at once. So it is being aware of those other things that are happening for centres and working with them, to find times that are appropriate to where PD is most likely to be effective.

Three service-based factors were identified by providers as also influencing the extent to which services became engaged in programmes. In some services, blockages within their internal communication systems meant that information emailed or posted to services did not get to the right people. Changes in staffing that interrupted the progress of the PD programme was a key issue influencing on-going engagement with PD. The third influencing factor was at a management level and is discussed in the section below that focuses on the influence of professional leaders.

Influence of the professional leaders

When asked about the influence of the professional leaders on whether services engaged in the PD programme, several providers highlighted the importance of both the professional leaders and the management of the service. Providers noted challenges when management dictated their teaching teams' participation in PD or took a superficial approach to PD:

> I visited face to face a service at the end of last year. The staff were absolutely excited about being involved and then the management decided they didn't want them to be at that stage. And we've come across that a number of times. Or else it goes the opposite way and management enrolled the staff and then the staff decided 'Oh we got told to do this, we don't want to do it'.

Providers used a number of strategies to engage leaders and management including working with umbrella organisations' professional practice managers or senior teachers; providing leadership mentoring programmes; providing individualised PD to managers and owners to gain traction for the wider PD programme; and supporting the development of distributed

leadership within services. As one provider noted, the impact of the professional leaders could be either positive or negative:

> I think one of the huge aspects we have had consistently at all our meetings is why does one centre show tremendous shift and is really engaging, is very energetic about the work and then there are centres where the momentum is just not there. And I think every time we have found it's been leaders within the centres. It might be the absolute leader, there might be head teachers within the different departments. In some cases it is the centre manager who has really taken the PD as an opportunity to push their teams and that is where the biggest shifts have happened…and we've had centres where… the leaders have almost been the ones who've slowed down the process.

A facilitator participating in this interview went on to comment that "you can almost pick going into a service to know how much shift they are going to make by the leadership. You can almost pick it, I think".

More systemic leadership issues within two types of services were identified by one provider:

> One of the service types I think it's really kicking in is in kindergartens because in kindergartens all you had to be was a good teacher to be a good head teacher and that's not the story any more…[the] activity system has changed, the rules have changed, like before kindergarten teachers had privileges such as start the same time, finish the same time, lunch together, non-contact together and so they were afforded those privileges, whereas now head teachers are having to think outside the box in terms of how to lead their team and that's one of the areas that I think is a problem.

> …but the main one, I think, in childcare is, education and care, around absent owners because there could be some amazing leadership potential that's absolutely tied at the knees because it can't move and we see that quite a lot. It's leaders not really knowing what it means to be a leader.

Services not engaging in PD programmes

Overall, providers indicated that few services in their targeted communities were choosing not to engage in PD programmes. In addition to the impact of ERO reviews or re-licensing on services' short-term engagement in PD referred to above, providers identified several other reasons for non-engagement, including services having their PD needs met through their own umbrella organisation or umbrella organisations withholding approval for their services to participate. Three umbrella organisations did not allow their services to participate – a large national education and care chain, a large national home-based care chain, and one kindergarten association:

> Basically what their reasons were was about protecting their own intellectual property, being able to stand alone and develop their own teaching innovation and a niche for themselves in the market, because it's market driven. They wanted to be seen as different, they wanted to be seen as standing tall and when they had teachers involved in some of our, we'd have cluster work, other services were benefitting from what their kindergartens were doing or the public seminars and things like that, so they were just trying to protect their organisation basically.

Engagement in other professional learning opportunities such as initial teacher education programmes, advanced study or other PD programmes such as *quick response* or the *Incredible Years* PD programme also influenced participation. The enhanced support offered through the participatory funding associated with the *Incredible Years* programme made it very appealing for some services and was a source of frustration for some providers unable to build such financial support into their own programmes. Some providers also felt there was a philosophical and pedagogical mismatch between the approaches advocated in the *Incredible Years* programme and the *Social Competency* strand of the ECE PD programmes. The plethora of programmes being offered to services in some targeted communities such as South Auckland was noted by providers working in these regions. In addition to the nationally available MoE-funded ECE PD and *Incredible Years* programmes, local MoE programmes focused on participation and a range of Ministry of Health programmes were also being offered.

Some services chose not to engage, believing that their PD needs were not aligned to the MoE focus areas. The key area of misalignment concerned planning and assessment, although several providers also indicated that they were able to address such issues within the focus areas where necessary.

Finally, services in 'survival' mode, including where there were significant changes in staffing or financial difficulties, were identified as either not engaging or engaged at a lower level or slower pace. As one provider noted, the work with such services was often quite different to what 'high-flying' centres were doing:

> And in some centres where there were a lot of challenges the engagement would look very different from centre to centre. So in some centres, they have engaged on that very high level of professional development and really stretching themselves to change their practice. For others it has been a more kind of basic level and time for them to get some of those more basic systems in place and to work well.

At times, providers made decisions to discontinue working with particular services. One provider described "excommunicating" services from their PD programme, with the knowledge of the local MoE office, citing this example:

> … an owner who kept changing the manager every 3 months and so our facilitator was starting again, and again, and again because it wasn't a place where the culture of PD was very developed anyway and so she talked to the owner and said…I can't ethically go on working with the centre and when he finally did it the last time he rang her and said, "I know what you're going to do, you're going to actually pull the plug on professional development, I need to just let you know I've got a new manager".

ONLINE SURVEY

We were interested in services' perceptions of how flexible their provider was in delivering their PD programme to meet the needs of their service. Services were asked to rate on a four-point scale whether their provider had been 'Very flexible' through to 'Very inflexible', and were also given the option of 'Unsure'. Table 6.5 shows that 89% of respondents felt that their provider had been 'Very flexible' or 'Flexible' in adapting the delivery of their PD programme.

When considered by programme type, there was little difference in the percentage responses from participants who felt that their provider had been 'Very flexible' in their programme delivery (54 – 59%). Respondents enrolled in programme two and/or three (40%) or in programme one plus programme two and/or three (32%) were more likely to perceive their provider as being 'Flexible' than those in programme one (25%). The overall numbers of respondents in each category indicating that their provider had been 'Inflexible', 'Very inflexible' or were 'Unsure' are too low for any meaningful comparison. The further through their programme, the more likely that respondents indicated that their provider was 'Very flexible' (rising from 44% for those at the beginning of their programme to 55% for those mid-way through and 59% for those at the end of their programme), although caution is required in interpreting the results from those at the beginning of their programme, given the low numbers in this category.

Table 6.5:   Provider flexibility in delivering programmes

Provider flexibility in adapting programme to meet service's needs	Response	Percentage
Very flexible	90	57%
Flexible	51	32%
Inflexible	9	6%
Very inflexible	2	1%
Not sure	7	4%
Total	159	100%

Respondents were asked to give reasons for their rating of their provider's flexibility. Thirty-nine respondents who had indicated their provider was 'Very flexible' offered comments – data analysis reveals seven key themes:

- Was flexible with timing of sessions (15): She worked within our time constraints and the availability of our parents. Ensured she attended our biggest session which would ensure our centre got maximum benefit.

- Listened to us and addressed our PD needs (14: [Facilitator] worked in with what we needed. She was in contact prior to meetings and observations to discuss what she had in mind or to ask if there was anything we would like to work on. Very, very helpful.

- Kept us going (3): We had changing parents involved and she kept the momentum going. She documented everything so we did not get lost.

- Was flexible when our needs changed (2): Our needs changed throughout the programme so our focus changed to reflect this

- Worked well with all team members (2): She has worked with the team but also with me as the team leader

- Tailored delivery approaches to meet our needs (2): [Facilitator] is absolutely fantastic and has been very flexible and has stuck by this centre even though it took a lot for this centre to start utilising the PD knowledge we were obtaining. She has exceeded my expectations.

- Supported us through earthquakes (1): Leading PD through Christchurch EQ's would have been extremely challenging... However our facilitator supported us by extending the duration, keeping us focused whilst understanding the challenges we were working with and kept supporting and believing in us to make the journey.

Analysis of responses by PD programme revealed a similar spread and focus of comments. Almost all these comments explicitly relate to facilitator practices connected to the face-to-face components of whole-centre or cluster delivery, rather than to online practices.

Eleven respondents who had rated their PD provider as 'Flexible' provided explanatory comments, spread across all programme types. Respondents offered positive comments under the following themes:

- Worked with the needs of their individual centre (3): Supportive and positive with regard to individual teachers' learning and progress

- Tailored delivery approaches to meet our needs (3): Provided extra workshop on request

- Met the challenges of working with our centre (2): It is hard with parents having children about and different responsibilities. She did the best she could with a group that mostly didn't want to be involved.

Three services made comments indicating issues that had affected the provider's ability to be flexible in their programme delivery, including: "After vocal discussions she was able to understand what we required/needed and how we could achieve this".

Four respondents, from across the different programme types, made comments explaining their rating of their PD provider as inflexible. These comments noted that they "had the flexibility to be able to meet the facilitator's needs rather than the other way around", that the PD was not adapted to them or didn't take their philosophy into account, or that it "didn't give us a choice to select a 'best match' facilitator to our service". No respondents who had rated their PD provider as very inflexible offered explanatory comments for their rating. Two respondents who had indicated they were unsure made comments, one indicating that there had been no adaption necessary whilst the other commented:

Overall feedback from teachers is that they felt facilitator wandered off track with our meetings and sometimes they lost track of the initial focus. However, as mentioned before, our experienced and skilled teachers were able to stay on track and complete self-review on our own.

Evidence as to how the providers engaged services in their PD programmes varied considerably across the 16 case studies. Whilst interviews with teachers did not specifically ask how their provider engaged them in their PD programme, their responses to a question about any particular challenges or successes experienced within their programme provided some information on this issue from their perspective. Two services provided no details, whilst two others provided few details on the strategies their PD provider had used to involve them. Two services indicated that they had initiated engagement in their programme by approaching the provider when they heard from other sources that there was PD available.

A number of services indicated particular difficulties that had impacted on their engagement in the PD programme. Some of these issues have been discussed in the previous chapter (see section, Immersion Māori and Pasifika services). Other difficulties included:

- Both Māori Immersion services described that the amount of documentation sent out by the provider at the beginning of the programme was overwhelming and that few staff members read it as a result: the supervisor of one of these centres said that it was off-putting, noting it was about an inch thick. She asked 'Who would read that?'

- One service was particularly negative about their PD experience, believing that their facilitator did not address their needs or support the teachers. This centre was on a MoE provisional license and it appeared that the issues within the team had been exacerbated by their involvement in PD.

- A home-based service felt that their provider did not make the PD programme as relevant for them as they could have; rather they felt that they had to 'translate' much of the material from a centre-based context to the home-based context.

- The structure of delivery for one service altered significantly between year one and two of their programme. Whilst the service recognised that this may have been due to circumstances beyond the control of their facilitator, they were frustrated and found it slowed their progress.

Less significant difficulties were noted by two services. Teachers in one centre noted that it was challenging attending evening workshops as these impacted on their family and church responsibilities, although they noted that they did enjoy them when they got there. A playcentre found it challenging to determine their topic as the fairly tight time-frame didn't enable consultation with a large group of parents.

Several services noted positive aspects about how their provider had engaged them in the PD programme. Significant amongst these were aspects related to the providers and facilitators: the use of Māori protocols that enabled the team in an immersion service to make immediate progress; the accessibility, support and helpfulness of the facilitator – described by one team as her 'unconditional support"; regular feedback received from facilitators on teachers' pedagogical documentation and planning that scaffolded their learning; and one-to-one time spent with teachers. Delivery approaches and activities that supported engagement identified by services included cluster meetings with other services; keeping reflective journals; setting realistic and attainable goals; and use of video-recordings of teachers' interactions with children. Being required to present on their PD journey to other services in their cluster was seen as beneficial by one service.

Chapter summary: Services' involvement and engagement in PD

Level 1: Participants' learning

- **How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?**

- **What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?**

Questions in this section of the evaluation did not directly address aspects of participants' learning that were enhanced as a result of the providers building relationships and engaging services in PD programmes. However, it is clear that the opportunities that providers created for services to connect with and work with others (both other ECE services and organisations outside of ECE) were actively taken up by teachers participating in the programmes. Data from the online survey indicate significant levels of increased communications with groups beyond the service, most especially with other ECE services and with schools.

Level 2: Organisational and structural support

- **How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?**

- **What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?**

The commitment of providers to engage with ECE services and to build relationships with them and other stakeholders has been exemplary. An extensive set of strategies have been employed by providers to engage eligible services in PD, with considerable time put into building relationships and tailoring the delivery of the programmes to meet services' needs and contexts. A significant feature of the current PD contracts has been the closer working relationship developed between providers and local MoE offices that have enabled targeted services to be identified and, almost always, a unified approach to be taken with services causing concern to either the Ministry or providers. Providers have been effective in engaging with umbrella organisations that generally report feeling informed and listened to.

A complex set of factors influence, positively and negatively, the extent to which providers are able to successfully engage services in PD programmes and build and maintain relationships with services and other stakeholders. Factors contributing to success included the targeted approach to PD which has enabled less proactive services to have the opportunity to engage in a programme. Given that findings from the evaluation of ECE PD programmes undertaken in 2005–06 (Cherrington & Wansbrough, 2007) showed many services' slow internal organisation processes resulted in them missing out on PD, this is a positive outcome of the targeted approach. Other factors contributing to providers' success in engaging services included: targeting management personnel to build their commitment to the PD process, using consultative approaches with services to determine PD focus areas, using an appreciative inquiry model that began from services' strengths, and having skilled facilitators who, in particular, were culturally competent and listened carefully to services' needs.

A number of challenges made building relationships and engaging services more difficult. These included providers working in new areas where they had little existing knowledge of the ECE and wider community and had to build new relationships, travel demands for providers working over large geographic regions, activities such as re-licensing and ERO reviews diverting services' focus away from engaging in PD, internal service communication blocks that resulted in information not being passed on to all staff, staff changes slowing engagement and progress, and management not providing the structural support (such as non-contact time or recompense for working afterhours) to help staff actively engage in their programme. The three

factors rated by services as most likely to impact on the development of an effective relationship with their provider were time for the facilitator to get to know the service, the geographical area covered by the facilitator, and access to the facilitator.

The importance of the professional leader(s) within ECE services is highlighted through both the provider interviews and the case study data. Leaders within services were instrumental in services' initial engagement; progress within the programme was greater when there was internal leadership (either from the designated leader or through distributed leadership) that maintained momentum.

Provider interviews indicate that few services declined to engage when invited to participate in PD programmes. Reasons for non-engagement included: umbrella organisations refusing permission for their services to participate, services having their PD needs met through their umbrella organisation, services engaging in other MoE or Ministry of Health-funded PD programmes, teachers undergoing initial teacher education programmes or advanced study, services feeling that the identified focus areas did not meet their PD needs, and services in 'survival mode' who did not have the capability to take on a PD programme.

Some particular issues of engagement and relationship building were evident for those Māori and Pasifika Immersion services who participated in the online survey and case study components of the evaluation (see Chapter 5).

Level 3: Participants' use of new skills and knowledge

- **How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?**

- **What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?**

The online survey revealed that services had extensively engaged with a range of other ECE services and organisations beyond their settings as a result of their PD programme. Whilst this occurred most frequently with other ECE services (70%) and schools (49%), services also reported engaging with a range of special education, health and social services and with local iwi and community cultural groups. Of interest is that when services were asked who they intended to continue talking with about teaching and learning after the completion of their programme, services indicated greater intended engagement with most external groups. Possible explanations for these differences include: the increased confidence and knowledge developed during the PD programme providing an impetus for services to expand their networks independently; influences beyond the PD programme that are also encouraging such engagement; and services responding to an implied expectation in the question that they should be engaging with other organisations.

Where services have developed relationships with stakeholders beyond ECE as a result of their PD programmes, these have occurred most frequently with schools and with iwi organisations, and have led to qualitative shifts, particularly in teacher attitudes and confidence. Evidence from the case studies points to teachers feeling more confident in working with teachers from their local schools and in drawing on the kawa and local knowledge of mana whenua.

Level 4: Outcomes for children

- How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community?

- What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?

Whilst the evaluation model did not seek to determine explicit links between how effectively PD providers built relationships with services and stakeholders and any improved learning outcomes for children, there are examples from the provider interviews and case study data that do indicate some such links. For example, Pasifika services working together in a cluster gave examples of planning shared learning experiences for children and families that celebrated cultural events important in their local communities. Several services that had been supported to make links with local iwi ended up participating in local kapa haka and community events, with examples given of children confidently performing waiata and haka in these public situations as well as in the services or at home.

Chapter 7: Results: Developing and sustaining communities of practice

This chapter addresses the fourth overarching evaluation question, *In what ways have COPs/PLCs been developed and sustained as a result of engagement in PD?* It presents data from the document analyses, provider interviews, online survey, and case studies to answer the following three evaluation questions:

- How successful have PD providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?

- How are communities of practice being defined? / What are the natures of these communities of practice?

- How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?

Evaluation Question 10. How successful have PD providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

If communities of practice are deemed to involve services working together then there was mixed success. A variety of approaches to bringing services together were noted in the milestone reports, including: seminars, workshops or wananga involving a number of services; cluster groups working on a particular focus; and online or blended communities. Although seminars, workshops or wananga potentially provide opportunities for networking, there was little evidence of how these resulted in the establishment of communities of practice as they seemed to mostly offer information and discussion. One provider offered retreats for pedagogical leaders in their national Under 2 and leadership programmes and reported that these resulted in sharing of thoughts, strategies and successes. A programme one provider described a breakfast series for leaders in addition to regular networks and seminars.

Clustering was an expectation in Programme 1B. Providers reported resistance from a number of services to cluster groups arising from services wishing to strengthen their own practice before sharing with others and from a preference for one-to-one time with facilitators. Facilitators from one provider noted some reluctance from services to share policy, procedures and centre practices in cluster workshops, particularly those services aligned to private providers and umbrella organisations, and commented that forming localised clusters of services for cross-fertilisation of ideas was more difficult than anticipated. Another provider identified a history of staff poaching that led to tense relationships, fear of sharing practices, and unresolved conflict in relationships with former staff as barriers to the cluster model and, as a result, provided a choice for services in who they clustered with. Strategies used to reduce such barriers included "messages about the unique application of similar concepts across different services".

Where successful, cluster models resulted in staff visiting other services, sharing resources outside cluster meetings, and the establishment of stronger links between services and schools. A specialist provider invited services not on the MoE PD list to PD cluster events as a means of strengthening the wider community of practice within that service type. They reported that collaboration was encouraged by cluster work and centres were supported to visit each other.

Websites and online communities were set up by some providers. Websites on their own were not reported to be effective in engaging teachers or encouraging the development of

communities of practice. Other platforms used by providers had mixed success. In addition a lack of broadband and infrequent use of email by some services created problems accessing online resources. The two national programmes used a variety of online tools: one provider had an interactive website that enabled services to download resources and used Skype for communication with services in addition to the usual email and phone contact. The other national PD programme involved blended in-centre support and cluster group meetings complemented by virtual delivery. This provider reported that inter-cluster synchronous virtual workshops worked well for those in the national leadership programme who used them and the Webinars and seminars (using Elluminate, an online workshop tool) in the Under 2 PD programme supported participants to engage with others and discuss practice.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

Providers indicated mixed success in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations that they were working in. They identified that the key to success was bringing together people with common interests and goals and building relationships between them: examples of how they did this include setting up and facilitating meetings; providing coaching and mentoring; establishing networks; including the maintenance of networks as a key strategy within services' self-review plans; developing online communities; requiring cluster members to present on their PD at cluster meetings; connecting individual services with other services, including taking staff to visit other services; and bringing in outside groups within the local community to be part of cluster meetings.

Providers shared examples of successes that they had had in developing communities of practice within their regions. These included bringing diverse services together in clusters where they could learn from others' perspectives. One provider commented:

> Diverse centres represented in a cluster model… where they come together and really click and can see they're benefiting from each other's' perspective or each other's experience, because they each bring something very different… it might have been that we've had a Montessori centre, Pasifika centre, something really quite diverse in that mix and somehow in that group they've managed to allow each of them to speak and be heard and others recognise that there's something to be learnt here and some of that is pretty inspiring because those relationships continue.

Enabling participants to experience other services' environments was a successful strategy in building communities of practice. One provider described how the strategies of holding cluster meetings at different services and taking leaders on visits to other services led to communities developing that were becoming self-sustaining:

> And I found that because each leader had seen each other in their own centre, and seen different things they liked then they'd get on the phone and go, "Oh where did you get that from? How did you do that?" So they've maintained that contact without me and even from the visits at the end of last year, a few leaders swapped teachers because they want to see different things go on and sent not just themselves but sent a, like a registering teacher, "Oh go and look at that environment".

Finding key teachers within the network or cluster who took on leadership roles was also an effective strategy. One provider described how a teacher was driving a school transition cluster in a community:

> One of the big successes for me particularly with the transition to school in my area was having someone like [name] who then took it out into the community and it really did impact on the children and the families and he got that next step in there and I've supported him along the way just saying, "hey, I'm here, what do you need, what answers do you need?" He uses me as his researcher, he'll often say to me, "Can you go and find out this, this, this and this" and I'll take it back to him but he's confident in his role to pass that information on.

Being service-specific was seen by a specialist provider as a key element of their success in developing communities of practices amongst their centres:

A significant success I would say is that we are service specific, that is all our team are [centre] people and that they know exactly what it means to be in a [centre] and come at things from a [centre] perspective. So all our team are firmly entrenched in the philosophy and the belief that parents are the best educators for their children. We are going to be quite different from all the other services you are going to be talking to but you know for [centre] it's about parents being the best educators to their children with appropriate support and that is our role as professional development to strengthen and enhance that philosophy.

Challenges in developing communities of practice were also identified. Some of these were logistical challenges such as the physical distances between services and the resulting travel that attending cluster meetings entailed for participants; creating time for participants to engage with other teachers and services; and, coordinating dates and times for meetings across services and schools working in cluster groups.

The other key issue resulted from levels of distrust between services, whether at the management level or at the team level. Providers noted that it could be difficult bringing services together from different organisations or management structures. One provider described the challenge of "moving people past historical connections and some quite immature relational behaviour, not talking to people and when people walk in the room they would leave and this sort of thing".

ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey included a section seeking services' views on the development and sustainment of communities of practice. This section began by asking services to indicate who, from a specified list, they would include in their community of practice (see Evaluation Question 11 below for responses) before asking respondents to indicate how successful they felt their provider had been in building a community of practice. Of the 146 services who responded to this question, 84% felt that their provider had been 'Very effective' or 'Effective' in building a community of practice. Fourteen per cent felt their provider had been 'Ineffective' whilst 3% felt the provider had been 'Very ineffective'. When respondents were considered by programme type, very similar results were found. Unsurprisingly, respondents at the beginning of their programme were less likely to see their provider as 'Very effective' or 'Effective' in building a community of practice (70%), than those who were mid-way through their programme (88%) or who were towards the end, had recently finished or had embarked on another round of PD (84%).

Table 7.1:   Provider effectiveness in building a community of practice

Effectiveness in building a COP	Number	Percentage
Very Effective	33	23
Effective	89	61
Ineffective	20	14
Very Ineffective	4	3
Total	146	100

CASE STUDIES

During the teacher interviews, teachers were asked who they saw as involved in their community of practice, how members of the COP were involved, how they dealt with potential issues of power imbalances within the COP, and what impact they thought the COP had had on their teaching practices and on children's learning outcomes. Teachers from two services made no comments whilst the supervisor in another stated that they didn't have a community of practice.

Data concerning who services considered to be part of their community of practice are reported under Evaluation Question 11 below. It was seldom apparent whether services had a

different view of who was included within their community of practice as a result of undertaking their PD programme or whether their interactions with different members of their COP had changed over the course of their programme. Exceptions to this were when services explicitly included their provider as a member of their community of practice or where they referred to groups and teachers who were part of their cluster group: for example, the Head Teacher in one service identified their COP as "a wide network of teachers, schools, PD cluster group, children, parents, families and those who have an interest" Other teachers within this team noted that:

> …the parents who were transitioning their children were particularly supportive and became more aware of the importance of a transition process. The parents became more proactive in helping to overcome any obstacles.

When asked how they dealt with potential issues of power imbalances within their COPs, two services commented that no issues had arisen and four services gave explicit responses. One home-based service had noted some examples where educators were not getting support from visiting teachers when they had different views on how best to support children's learning in their PD focus area. In this situation the team leader felt it was her responsibility "to mediate the power imbalances and provide positive support for all".

One playcentre felt that a key issue was ensuring that they empowered parents within the playcentre community. The site evaluator's interview notes recorded that they:

> Talked a lot about parents being empowered in their relationships with schools, and individually gaining confidence. Gave the example of how a parent has responded to the local paper publishing a photo of her child with the wrong details. She asked that it be republished correctly, and emailed the president telling her what she had done, adding "I did it for the sake of my child". They commented "She never would have done that before".

A Māori Immersion service noted that they had responsibilities to the wider community and iwi, and that collaboration between the centre's management and staff was essential if they were to meet those responsibilities. Finally, teachers from a kindergarten noted that they dealt with power issues within the teaching team members of the COP by talking concerns through:

> For example we had debate in the team about karakia and eventually compromised with karakia that wasn't religious. When it came up we discussed it, left it for a while and then revisited it. Time is an important aspect in order to think about other views.

Evaluation question 11. How are communities of practice being defined?/ What are the natures of these communities of practice?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

No definitions of communities of practice were evident in the milestone reports. The terminology around communities varied considerably with the following terms – online learning community; communities of services; learning community; communities of learners; and community of inquiry – all appearing in milestone reports in addition to the term, community of practice. It was unclear who these terms referred to in most cases and it appears that there is confusion as to the meaning of this term. Given the registered teacher criteria use of the term professional learning communities, this may be a better concept to encourage.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

Similar views were expressed by providers when asked how they would define a community of practice: "a group of people who have a practice in common and a task in common", a "common interest", a "shared vision of good practice", and "groups of people with a shared purpose" are illustrative of how providers define communities of practice. The emphasis on a shared purpose was noted by one provider who commented that they were:

…coming back to that philosophy, know why you're here, cut the crap, focus on what you're here to do and I think all the molly coddling and all the nice sort of fluffy, I've got heaps of time to get you there, has gone and so the strategies are your professional responsibility to step up and participate as a community of practice, both within your service and across services.

When asked to give examples of communities of practice, providers described a number of possibilities for groupings. These included:

- The immediate ECE service that may include teachers/educators, parents, management and children

- Cluster groups as communities of practice.

- Groups of ECE services from the same geographic community or of a particular service type such as Pasifika services that came together from across different geographical communities.

- ECE services and the schools that they contributed to.

- ECE services from across a larger community, such as a small city or region.

- National and international ECE communities of practice.

- Online communities, both open access and closed discussion groups set up for individual clusters, such as leadership clusters.

- Communities of practice that facilitators belonged to as individuals, that they drew on to support their work with services.

- Mana whenua as a community of practice.

One provider noted that there were variations in the extent to which cluster groups were actually communities of practice, and that it took time for clusters to develop into COPs. Encouraging members of cluster groups to disseminate their PD work to the wider cluster was found to be an effective strategy for building communities.

ONLINE SURVEY

We were interested in how services participating in the PD programmes defined communities of practice. From a predetermined list, respondents were asked to indicate which people and organisations they would include in their community of practice. Table 7.2 reveals that the responding services tend to take a broad, inclusive approach to who they consider to be part of their community of practice. Almost all services identified that parents and whānau (98%), teachers and educators within their team (96%) and the children attending the service (95%) would be considered part of their community of practice – it is interesting that four percent of services did not consider the teachers/educators within their team to be part of their community of practice.

Table 7.2:   People and organisations included by services in their community of practice

Who services include in their community of practice	Number	Percentage
Parents and whānau of the children attending your service	157	98%
The teachers/educators in your team	154	96%
The children attending your service	152	95%
Colleagues from other ECE services	126	79%
Principals/teachers from the primary schools your children go on to	104	65%
Representatives from outside organisations such as health and social services	91	57%
Local iwi/hāpu/cultural community groups	86	54%
Other (please list)	14	9%
Unsure who we would include in our Community of Practice	0	0%

Many responding services perceived their community of practice to extend beyond their service to include colleagues from other ECE services (79%) and principals and teachers from the primary schools that their children transitioned to (65%). More than half the responding services included representatives from outside organisations such as health and social services (57%) and from local iwi, hāpu and cultural community groups (54%). When given the opportunity to list other groups or people, thirteen services responded: five listed specific ECE services or organisations such as the Playcentre Association or the Montessori Association of New Zealand whilst three identified church or special character organisations they were affiliated with. Four services each identified other groups such as educationalists (1), team building company (1), health professionals (1), and "Talented people in our wider community e.g., artists, musicians, writers and retired people who have a skill they would like to offer" whilst one respondent offered a general comment.

Very little difference in responses is evident by programme type, particularly where the relatively low numbers of respondents in some combinations of programme type are concerned. Slightly more services in programme two and/or three included teachers within the service as part of their community of practice whilst those in programme one plus programme two and/or programme three were slightly less likely to include children and other ECE services and slightly more likely to include schools, outside organisations, and local iwi/hāpu and cultural groups. When respondents at different stages of their programme were considered, there was a general rise in the proportion of services including parents and other ECE services as part of their community of practice, and quite a large increase in the proportion of services who included children and outside organisations. A slight drop off in services including schools, outside organisations and iwi/hāpu and cultural groups from those respondents midway through their PD programme to those who were about to finish, had recently finished or had started a second round of PD may indicate some difficulty in sustaining engagement with these organisations following the completion of the PD programme.

CASE STUDIES

When asked who they would include in their community of practice, teachers'/educators' responses fell into three main categories:

- Members of the teaching team only

- Members of the wider centre community, including teachers, parents, whānau, children, management, and, for several services, their PD provider

- Communities of practice that extended beyond the service and included, for example, other ECE services, iwi, tertiary institutions, Boards of Trustees, umbrella and national organisations, special education services, midwives, district health boards (and their community initiatives), speech therapists, Plunket, local libraries, student teachers, churches, cultural groups, schools and "any interested people".

Examples of how communities of practice are being enacted within the case study services are evident in data reported for earlier evaluation questions and are not repeated here.

Evaluation question 12. How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

Overall there was limited information in the milestone reports on how providers worked to ensure sustainability of communities of practice, unsurprisingly, given the timing of the evaluation midway through the contract period. Several providers mentioned services transitioning from in-depth work to clusters. Given the reluctance of services to share their practice for the reasons noted earlier then this seems a useful strategy.

A key factor in one provider's exit strategy is using the umbrella organisation to provide on-going support for centres. Facilitators were working with and building competence in the association personnel focused on association-driven self-review and effective support systems.

One provider reported that some services had mastered the action research/self-review model and were now working independently. Gradual exit options offered included workshops for services in the broader location, access to facilitators via email, Skype, phone and wiki as well as on-going access to their website. Another provider's milestone for the period just before the evaluation took place contained discussion on exit strategies stating that it was "unlikely that there will be a clear and final exit" and that facilitators and the different programme strands were also intended to provide on-going support for services. For another provider, re-enrolment was expected after the first year of PD.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

Several providers noted that many of their services enrolled in phase one of their programme had continued on with professional development in phase two, albeit at times with changes to the structure of their programme (for example, moving from an intensive whole-centre or cluster programme to a less intensive network programme). Decisions about whether phase one services continued in a phase two programme were made on the basis of the service's progress in both the focus areas and their ability to be self-sustaining. Facilitators were seen as critical in supporting on-going sustainability as they often provided an initial point of contact for further information and support. One provider noted:

> Our role has worked differently depending on what the need is of that area. Sometimes it is a matter of just putting people together, other times it actually is being the person that runs the whole thing. [place] is a prime example, when I started doing that it was very much I played a very active role in that but what's ended up happening is that through that time we've ended up finding key people to help so what happens is that longevity, that project is now somewhat running itself. We're taking more of a back seat in that and being there as a support role …

A range of strategies were used to support both individual services and communities of practice to be self-sustaining after their PD programmes were completed, including:

- Using online environments to make resources available and to provide opportunities to network with other services.

- Maintaining email distribution lists so that information and resources could be easily distributed to services on a regular basis.

- Providing COPs with contact details for different groups and organisations within their communities so that services could make their own contact with others, as required.

- Establishing and maintaining network groups (for example, at an organisational level or within a particular community) so that services could maintain relationships with other services and organisations. At times, providers attended networks established by other organisations so that they could remain current with the work of that network and encourage new services to participate.

- Providing programmes of seminars within particular regions open to all ECE services, not just those engaged in in-depth programmes.

- Involving key leaders from earlier programmes in delivering PD to other services. For some providers this occurred with individuals whilst others ran leadership clusters whose members undertook this work and also presented to each other at cluster meetings.

- Providing a leadership and mentoring programme for key staff from services to support them to maintain sustainability within their service.

- Review services' achievements against the rubrics and undertake a goal-setting process so that services had identified the next steps on their learning journeys. Identifying and making connections with local support networks was an important part of this process.

Services were asked in what ways their PD provider had worked with them after the completion of their programme to support the sustainability of their community of practice, and were able to indicate all applicable options from a fixed item set. Table 7.3 shows that 140 services responded to this question with just over half (55%) indicating that their provider had established on-going networks and clusters whilst 35% indicated the provision of on-going resources available online. Just over one-quarter (26%) noted their provider used an online platform to encourage interactions between services.

Table 7.3: **Strategies used by providers to support COP sustainability**

Strategies used to support COP sustainability	Response	Percentage
Established on-going networks/clusters of services	77	55%
Provides on-going resources online	49	35%
Uses online platform to encourage interaction between services	36	26%
Other	31	22%

Almost one quarter of services (22%) responding to this question noted "other" with 30 providing written comments. Seven of these comments noted that their PD programme was incomplete so they had not yet got to the point of needing support to sustain their community of practice, e.g., "haven't got to this point in the PD yet -we still have a few months left". Fourteen commented that they had not had support (9), were unsure (3) or this wasn't applicable (2) whilst three made negative comments, e.g., "totally ineffective" or "moved focus onto another geographical area of teachers so we have been dropped a bit". Six respondents made specific comments about actions that their provider had taken to support the sustainability of their community of practice:

- Ministry documents, documented material in conjunction with verbal workshop

- Workshop with association and other playcentres in our association

- Establishing the method we work through when dealing with self-review

- We haven't had our meeting with another service yet - it is scheduled

- Worked with our Association Pou Whakarewa Tikanga Māori

- Assisting management with the leadership skills necessary to continue to foster this.

Respondents who had participated in a national programme or a combination of a national programme and programme one were much more likely to indicate that their provider was providing an online platform to encourage interactions (36% for programme two and/or three and 28% for programme one plus programme two and/or three compared with 13% for programme one only) or on-going resources online (43% for programmes two and/or three and 44% for programme one plus programme two and/or three compared with 20% for programme one only). Services who were enrolled in either programme two or three only were less likely to indicate that their provider had established on-going networks or clusters of services (47% compared with 59% for both programme one only and programme one plus programme two and/or three).

Those respondents who were midway through their programme or who were nearly at the end, recently finished or who had enrolled in a second round of PD were more likely to indicate that their provider had used any of the strategies noted in this question than were those respondents at the beginning of their programme.

Services were not explicitly asked how their provider had worked with them to ensure that their communities of practice were sustainable after the PD programme was completed. Whilst several services indicated that they expected their cluster groups to continue beyond the programme there was little or no evidence at this stage of the programmes as to whether and how this would occur. Some services expressed some anxiety about their ability to sustain the gains made during their programme without the on-going support of their facilitator. For example, one service that believed they had made huge gains in terms of their transition processes and understandings of the role of emotion in children's social competency said:

> We wonder how much we will continue without the impetus, without the regular input. We will work on transition into the centre but will we keep up the progress? There are no plans for working as part of a continuing cluster.

Some services noted that their PD programmes had been intensive and that, following completion of their programmes, this intensity had lessened. The supervisor of a Māori Immersion service noted that a huge amount of work had been completed in 2011 and that it would not have been possible to sustain this workload in 2012. As a result they had engaged in fewer sessions in 2012. Unfortunately, staff changes after the completion of the 2011 programme combined with the reduced intensity of the 2012 programme meant that the centre had not been able to fully maintain the gains made in the first year.

Chapter summary: Developing and sustaining COPs a result of engagement in PD

Level 1: Participants' learning

- **How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?**

Where PD clusters have been established and are working successfully, participants' learning has been considerable. In these situations, participants have had opportunities to break down barriers, address misconceptions about others' roles and work practices (particularly in those clusters addressing transitions to school), and to learn from others' perspectives. Having opportunities to visit other services and develop stronger relationships between services has contributed to participants' learning, both about the focus of the PD and as members of the community of practice.

A key element of success in the cluster group models, and thus the learning of participants, has been the identification and mentoring of key teachers who take on leadership roles within the cluster or their service. The provision of leadership clusters and mentoring programmes is supporting services to develop their communities of practice and grow into self-sustaining communities.

Level 2: Organisational and structural support

- **How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?**

- **How are communities of practice being defined? / What are the natures of these communities of practice?**

- **How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?**

Providers use a wide range of strategies and tools to support the development of communities of practice, and most services felt that their provider was 'Very effective' (23%) or 'Effective' (61%) in building communities of practice (Online survey). Factors that impacted on how effectively cluster groups developed into communities of practice included logistical challenges

such as geographical isolation and distances that providers and/or services had to travel for meetings; time constraints; and coordinating meeting dates across different services and organisations such as schools. The influence of relational aspects – teacher confidence; existing relationships and levels of trust or distrust between teachers and services – impacted on the development of clusters into communities of practice (Provider interviews; Document analysis).

There is evidence that the homogeneity of services and providers involved influences the effectiveness of cluster groups. Playcentre (both services and provider) highlighted the importance of their shared philosophy; in contrast some Pasifika and Māori Immersion services identified that they did not make as much progress in their PD when their provider did not share cultural understandings and felt frustrated when their progress was slowed by working in clusters with non-Immersion services. Heterogeneous cluster groups appear to work more effectively for non-Immersion services that are able to gain additional benefit from working alongside services that are steeped in, particularly, Māori or Pacific Nations cultures and languages.

The data suggest that providers and services define communities of practice in multiple ways, including membership of different groups. Services tend to define, as a minimum, that their community of practice includes parents/whānau along with children, and may extend to include other ECE services, schools and other organisations and personnel such as health and social services. Providers tend to define communities of practice by their purpose, rather than by their membership, suggesting that they are groups with a common purpose.

It is still early days within this contract round for providers to be supporting services with exit strategies so that they are able to have sustainable communities of practice, as at the time of the evaluation many services that had completed phase one PD programmes had either continued into further in-depth phase two programmes or had transitioned into a programme of reduced intensity. There was evidence that providers were developing and using a range of strategies to support services to be self-sustaining following completion of their programmes – such as open access to websites offering online communities and resources and the provision of regular seminars series available to all services in particular regions – and that services were making use of these. Given the timing of the evaluation, it is too early to determine the effectiveness of these strategies over the long term.

Level 3: Participants' use of new skills and knowledge

- **How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?**

There is some evidence, particularly from the case study component of the evaluation, of teachers, educators and parents feeling more empowered, as a result of the PD programme to act as advocates for children. Examples of shifts in teacher confidence, knowledge and agency were also apparent as a result of their engagement in clusters focused on transition to school or when their programme involved developing relationships with mana whenua.

Level 4: Outcomes for children

- **How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in?**

The evaluation methodology makes it difficult to directly attribute any impact from the development of communities of practice to enhanced learning outcomes for children. However, earlier chapters of this report have highlighted the impact of the PD programmes on outcomes for children across the focus areas, and in terms of their identities, languages and cultures being recognised and affirmed by teachers.

Chapter 8: Results: Use of the rubrics

This chapter addresses the fifth overarching evaluation question, *In what ways have the rubrics been used by PD providers and services?* It presents data from the document analyses, provider interviews, online survey, and case studies to answer the following four evaluation questions:

- How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?

- How have the PD providers been using the rubrics?

- In what ways have services been using the rubrics?

- How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services' practices?

Evaluation question 13: How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

There is minimal evidence from provider reports that show the rubrics contributing directly to teacher practice in ways that improved learning outcomes for children. However, there are many examples of improved practices resulting in improved rubric ratings. For example:

Most services moved within the rubric ratings, and those who didn't move a level were able to improve on descriptors within a level. Some of the changes made by these centres included:

- Increased cultural awareness

- Improved learning environments (resources, physical layout, teacher non-contact)

- Child initiated approaches being encouraged by teachers

- Improved competence in children doing their own problem solving

- Children's play being sustained and extended….

There is evidence the rubrics stimulated discussion about aspects of practice – "The process of rating the team against the criteria and providing evidence in practice of the rating 'in action' has resulted in some deep reflection" – whilst using the rubrics led services to address topics they might otherwise have ignored. For example, the inclusion of rubric B led to a specific focus on Māori learners, sparked a curiosity about Māori pedagogy for some, and led others to explore ways in which planning, assessment and evaluation practices can reflect a bicultural curriculum. Similarly:

> Leadership has come through as a popular focus… attributed in part to the inclusion in the first three rubrics…. Reflections and ratings with this rubric at the beginning of the programme enable conversations about leadership and decision-making processes. As a result these conversations have continued into the programme and become a priority.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

Only one comment within the provider interviews referred to the direct impact of the rubrics in focusing teachers on improved learning outcomes for children:

> I think the rubrics have really helped focus teachers on the outcomes for children. … The first edit didn't have the outcome indicators written down and so for some of the centres part of the exercise was to have that conversation about, 'This is teacher behaviour. This is what the indicator is for the educator. What would it mean for the children? What would it mean for the whānau?' But with the second edit we had those indicators so it has made it a lot easier for centres who would have struggled.

There were, however, a multitude of examples demonstrating that the rubrics were an important ingredient within the services' facilitator-led PD journey.

The survey results showed not all services engaged in PD have used the rubrics. Responses indicated about a third of services either were not aware of the rubrics or did not use them at all. Table 8.1 shows that 35.6% (N=63) fall into these two categories. Discounting the 12 services that identified themselves as 'Just started our PD Programme', 29% of services who are currently engaged in one of the PD programmes or who have completed one are unaware of or have not used the rubrics. For this group, the rubrics will not have had a significant influence on teaching practices:

Table 8.1: **Extent to which services have used the rubrics relevant to their PD programme**

Answer	Response	%
Not at all	25	14.1%
A little	74	41.8%
A great deal	32	18.1%
All the time	8	4.5%
We are not aware of the rubrics	38	21.5%
Total	177	100%

Very few of the 125 responses to the survey question 'What have you found most helpful about using rubrics in your PD programme?' linked to enhanced learning outcomes for children. Only seven responses made an explicit link to children and/or learning outcomes, and four of these were from services close to the end or having finished their PD programme. Two were brief references to learning stories, e.g. "To give more depth to learning stories". The other five were general statements: e.g. "It has allowed us to think about the importance of our programme and also why we are wanting to meet these rubrics (Why are these practices important and what do they mean for children?)".

Possible reasons for a lack of focus on learning outcomes for children are:

- Only 23% of services reported working with the rubrics either 'A great deal' or 'All the time'

- Because the rubric indicators identify 'Outcomes for children', services that highlight the usefulness of the rubric document in providing clear goals to work towards, are focused on the end result for children although not commenting specifically on this (for further discussion see Question 15).

- The lack of focus on implications for children may reflect a continuing focus on teacher practices within the profession.

- Providers were instructed to use the rubrics with services only at the start and end of the PD programme, and so services still engaged in PD may only have engaged with the document once.

- The wording of the survey questions ('What have you found most helpful about using rubrics in your PD programme?' and 'What have you found unhelpful when using the rubrics in your PD programme?') did not explicitly direct services to think about learning outcomes for children.

In interviews conducted as part of the case study site visits, teachers were asked the following questions about the rubrics:

a. Who was involved from the service?

b. What suggestions do you have for improving the rubrics?

c. Any examples where the rubrics helped you to really confront and shift your practices, or where you could recognise changes in learning for children?

The answers to the questions a) and b) are covered in discussion of Questions 15 and 16 respectively. Here, the focus is on responses to question c). The most frequent response to this question was along the lines of "the rubrics made no difference" or just "no". Very few examples of changes were given, and those that were related to practices. A manager said:

> Not really specifically change but there was the issue around effective teaching for Māori children and thinking about and understanding what that, what pedagogy actually meant in those terms. Yes, so shifting our thinking and understanding – not necessarily in our practices if that makes any sense but thinking, we now know what they are meaning and we are doing those things. But it was our understanding of what exactly that meant, and what we thought we were doing as well, but we didn't know exactly what that was.

Other comments from teachers included: "Yes [they have helped shift practices] in relation to reflective practices, the review processes and documentation". Another commented that, on reflection, she felt that maybe the rubrics affected their practices "unintentionally".

Evaluation question 14. How have the PD providers been using the rubrics?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

PD provider reports vary considerably in the prominence given to use of the rubrics in their programmes. Reports indicate variation in how intensively PD providers and/or facilitators engaged with the content of the rubrics. Some describe providing support for the use of the rubrics within their PD teams, recognition that facilitators needed to be familiar with the rubrics and the focus areas, and to plan how, when and by whom (i.e., facilitator, service, or in combination) the rubrics should be used. One provider addressed the issue of consistency; another had concerns with its use as an effective evaluation tool.

Some providers adapted (or considered adapting) the rubrics to make them more appropriate to services. Adaptations included changing the indicators and changing the format to make it more readily accepted. One provider was concerned to ensure te ao Māori perspectives were considered across all areas, while a second provider assessed the rubrics as inappropriate for their sector and, in consultation with MoE, used alternative evaluation tools. In contrast, one provider described the rubrics as a "useful and easy tool to operate".

There is considerable evidence in the reports that PD providers found the rubrics useful in a variety of ways:

- To assess a service's level of practice as part of the entry analysis process
- To collaboratively identify the gap between intentional and actual practice and set goals for the PD programme
- To generate discussion around good practice and raise awareness of what it takes to be high functioning in these areas of practice
- To challenge centre policy and practice
- To gauge how critically services reflect on their practice

- To generate spontaneous self-reviews in services

- To gather evidence to inform planned self-reviews

- To support collective understanding of the skills and dispositions children would be acquiring in high quality ECE programmes

- To measure and reflect on progress and affirm outcomes

- To set future goals as part of the exit process from PD

Use of the rubrics within the initial entry analysis process:

It is clear from most reports that the rubrics were part of the initial entry analysis, although sometimes this was preceded by a period of relationship-building. There appears to be considerable variation in how the initial rubric rating was done, who was involved, and how effective the process was – and some reports do not include any information on this initial use. Described variations include:

- Services completed the rubric evaluation independently, before meeting with the facilitator

- A collaborative assessment at a facilitator-service meeting

- Rubrics introduced at a group gathering of services. One provider found many services then chose not to engage with them, despite individual follow up in-centre meetings; the provider is planning to change the way rubrics are introduced.

- Services struggling with using the rubrics. There are references to additional facilitator-developed activities and resources being used with services to support their engagement with the document.

- It is not always clear which of the rubrics were used in the initial assessment process. One provider reports using rubrics A, B and C in initial rating with services, another refers to services being asked to use rubrics A, B and C along with the rubric relevant to their area of focus

- When the rubrics were used alongside other strategies (e.g., video of service practices) in the entry phase, the relative significance of each is not always clear.

- In some reports there is no reference to use of the rubrics as part of the initial needs analysis meetings: while there is reference to agreeing on setting goals and indicators, the rubrics are only referred to in relation to evaluations

Provider reports indicate a tension between the process of engaging with the rubrics, the time needed to do this effectively, and the overall PD plan, indicating that some providers see the rubric process as an 'add-on' rather than an integral component of the PD programme. For example, a provider reports that where two days are allocated to a centre, one day will be taken up with baseline and rubric discussion, leaving just one day for new material to be introduced to the team. This timing had not always been planned for, and some providers are amending future programmes to take account of this. One refers to using the rubrics in "streamlined ways with all services so as to maintain momentum in programmes and maximise facilitator time".

There is also evidence of a tension between the process of building a relationship with the service, and simultaneously assessing the service realistically against the rubrics. There is recognition that some services are not able to assess themselves objectively, and recurring references to services initially over-assessing themselves, and so apparently making little progress.

Impact of the rubrics on services' initial goal-setting:

Discussion around the rubrics is identified as one factor influencing services' choice of focus area. (Other factors included the service's philosophy, their self-identified priorities, recent ERO reports, and their viewing of video taken as part of the initial needs assessment process.) Some facilitators found the rubrics useful in generating discussion around good practice, and in promoting reflection around the descriptors. Two provider reports give detail on how the rubrics were used to generate discussion and show how indicator statements were used to challenge centre policy and practice, to gauge how critically participants were reflecting on their own practices, and to further challenge them. One provider reports:

> The engagement with the rubrics is revealing the need for services to reflect in more depth around the descriptors, as for some, it is the first time these educators have consciously and deliberately thought about these concepts in a meaningful way. Educators act and guide experiences in a particular way based on their training and experience from modernist theoretical perspectives. Our push to engage in thinking, sparked by the rubrics, to be more responsive to the real lives of learners participating in their service is redefining what quality practices look like in their place, tugging at [the] core of the culture of the service and the identity of the educator, nudging them in new directions, transforming the way they think and act.

That provider summarised the contribution of the rubrics in this way: "The revised rubrics will continue to make a rich contribution to dialogue with service participants and raise awareness of what it takes to be high functioning in these dimensions of practice". In particular, the use of rubrics A, B and C in initial rating with services, was seen to increase participants' awareness of practices in those areas, and at times influenced the choice of PD focus.

The rubrics were not used in isolation. PD provider reports indicate they were one of a number of strategies used which impacted positively on teacher practices. References were made to the impact of the rubrics when used in combination with readings, with video of interactions between adults and children, and with *Te whāriki, Kei tua o te Pae* and *Ngā arohaehae whai hua* documents.

PD Provider feedback on rubrics:

Throughout the reports there are a number of specific comments about the rubrics, and how they were used:

- Facilitators need to be trained in the use of rubrics if they are to be an effective evaluation tool.

- The descriptors for each stage are not sufficiently differentiated and the highly effective category is often too weak.

- Centres often demonstrated some elements in all levels concurrently which made for 'fence sitting' on a 3 or close to it, both at the beginning and end of programmes.

- Negative statements in rubric level 5; a concern that services would not choose to identify with negative statements such as 'Do not affirm Māori as Māori' and that this would contribute to flawed information. Services then look to the next set of descriptors—which are in level 3—and so effectively convert the document to a 3-point scale.

- Rubric G: Rubrics for transition have been shown to be weak at the higher end (very effective). Facilitators felt it was too easy for teams to score themselves as a 1.

- Rubric I: One provider reports "The social competence rubric was particularly challenging to work with at the start of the PD process". The discussion around this point suggested it was the topic and the current practices, rather than the rubric itself that was challenging.

Discussion by PD providers of their use of the rubrics covered: the variety of ways the rubrics are used with services, adaptations, reactions to the second edition, use of the rubrics within their own teams, plus some specific comments about the document.

Use of the rubrics with services

The interviews provided more in-depth information on how PD providers are using the rubrics with services, and changes they are making to improve that process. For some providers their adjustments have focused on efficiency and ensuring rubric assessments are completed, but in other cases the changes are aimed at ensuring services' more thoughtful engagement with the content of the rubrics and more authentic assessment. Such differences reflect underlying variations in the role allotted to the rubrics within providers' PD programmes.

All but one of the PD providers routinely uses the rubrics with services. That other provider has chosen to use it as "a tool for facilitators" and explained "the content of the rubrics, the indicators" are used in the needs analysis "in terms of selecting programmes and focus areas, in terms of building the programme plans and carrying out the self-review". Services evaluate themselves: "The facilitator doesn't decide how well they have gone against the indicators. The centre decides that. The facilitator just links it to the number".

Introducing the rubrics to services

The interviews revealed continuing variation, and adjustments, in how providers introduce the rubrics. Some introduce them at the initial meeting. One reported that introducing them early was more efficient:

> Usually that is always a task that we complete prior to beginning PD so we try and get that rubric process done before we actually get into the next step and really engage in the PD. If we jump into the PD side, even if it's just introducing it, before the rubrics are completed we never get the rubrics completed. We sort of learnt that early on, got to put the early time into getting that done.

Others have found it more effective if the rubrics are introduced later. One uses them only after an initial discussion around videoed practice/philosophy has occurred. Another explained the shift to a delay in introducing them; because she "had no relationship with them … no prior knowledge of that service", she could not challenge their self-assessment. Now "we do it after we've built that relationship with them".

It was clear some providers are putting increasing emphasis on the rubrics as a tool in their PD work with services, which will contribute to the impact of the document. One provider positioned the time spent working with the rubrics as an important part of the overall PD process:

> And that comes back to the fact that we have that length of time as well. So it's the same with the action plan, because that links very strongly … with the rubrics. [They] have to be gone through before they get to that cementing their action plan, so for us it's not about 'oooh', you go for your next visit 'You haven't got our goals yet'. That's not the big deal. What the big deal is – is what they are choosing is going to be realistic and that it's matching with what the rubrics are saying. So it's not about a speed thing, it's definitely a quality versus quantity exercise and the rubrics kind of help with that …. And they also have to identify an area that's manageable for them because sometimes through that process they had lots of gaps but we haven't got enough time to do all of that with them so we identify one small kind of bite-sized piece but hopefully give them the tools and strategy to be able to implement the other things.

Two providers noted they stress the rubrics are a Ministry tool. One believed this added "credibility" and that the "importance of language, culture and identity comes through". The other describes them as:

An evaluative tool to measure the effectiveness of the provider…. Some of them fight it but see past their own issues with it to see that it's about something bigger than them. Especially when they know the rubrics are more about us than them, that helps them to move.

Who completes the rubrics?

Despite the statement in the rubric guidelines that "The service and the provider will jointly establish where the service is rated against the rubrics based on observation of practice, discussions and or review of documentation" (Draft revised rubrics, December 2011, p.5) provider interviews indicated considerable variation around who completes the rubrics. The one provider who raised the issue of services not returning completed rubrics was introducing the rubrics at a collective gathering but leaving services to complete their ratings independently. Again, at times providers' focus is partly on expediency:

So sometimes we might do one rubric with an individual or a whole group and walk them through the process and they'll now go away and do the others. Sometimes it's one person in the centre takes responsibility, other times the whole team. Whatever is going to gain their engagement and not put them off the PD ….so somehow we get there.

In other cases a focus on ensuring whole-team engagement and a thoughtful process guided facilitator decision-making: "If you get them to take it away it's usually one person who does it".

The variations providers are making in the way they introduce the rubrics, are contributing to how services initially assess themselves. Providers made repeated references to services overrating themselves and then either not shifting, or appearing to shift backwards, and several providers identified this as a barrier. Three factors were seen to contribute to this: services' initial lack of self-awareness, not wanting to show themselves in a bad light to an unknown facilitator, and increasing reflectiveness as a result of the PD. Comments included:

- And people, when they fill it in themselves, by themselves, because they don't know that they don't know, they score themselves highly.

- At the start of the relationship at the end of the day we're external and if they have had a bad ERO report or are in that sort of downward spiral they will inflate their rating because it's part of protecting yourself and your centre. And you can see through that and I think as the relationship builds people feel more comfortable.

To counter the issue of overrating, not only were providers adjusting how and when the rubrics were introduced, but some also spoke in detail about the kind of evaluative conversations facilitators were having with teachers during the process. They described facilitators challenging teachers to provide evidence: "You can really find a challenging question because you can word it so that they go 'Aaah – where's the evidence to suggest that we *do* do that?' And then you say to them 'what might that look like?'". Another described asking "things like, *All* children? *All* parents? Who are the iwi?" and "Where would I find evidence of that in the centre?" In other cases services may be initiating the evaluative conversations themselves (for further detail see Evaluation Question 15 later in this chapter):

Centres will revisit their indicator and they will have an evaluative conversation around how they feel they are going. Many of the programmes are doing that all the way through the programme, always reflecting on what shifts, what changed since the last time we were together and what's working and what's not and what could we review. So we are gathering evidence against the indicators all the time, and at the end of programmes at the final evaluation where again the centres will reflect on the changes they have made, the progress they have made.

Which rubrics are used – and when

It is clear from the interviews that providers also vary in which – and how many – of the rubrics they introduce, and when. Variations include:

- Introduce the "three core" rubrics at a group meeting for services to rate themselves. The focus area rubric is introduced later when the topic area has been selected.

- Introduce the first rubric around language, culture and identity at a wananga: "And then once the service [has] identified the focus area they want to work in, then we would hone down into that particular rubric and look at that with them"

- "We try and use 4 rubrics with every service and then the rubric related to the focus area, so there could be 5 or 6. It's a huge amount of time given to the rubric process and the facilitators don't always have the time to spend to support the centres to do all 5 rubrics".

How initial assessment with the rubrics can contribute to services' goal setting

Providers found the initial use of the rubrics with services useful within their PD programme:

- To prioritise what a service is going to work on
- To focus teachers on evidence-based practice
- To focus on outcomes for children
- As a catalyst for services to select a relevant focus
- As a catalyst for services to reassess a previously chosen focus

Use of the rubrics in the final evaluation of the PD programme

There was much less comment from providers on how they use the rubrics in the final evaluation, although it was clear that there was also variation here. Some talked of doing it "at the end of the year", or of "revisiting the rubrics" with services who were exiting. There it was described as part of the process of looking ahead, "leaving a bit of an action plan if you like sitting there". But for other providers few if any services had completed the PD; "At the end of the programme, that's when we'll do it … because that's what it asks for, beginning and end and we've taken it quite literally".

Other ways in which PD providers have found the rubrics valuable

Some PD providers described using the rubrics in a variety of ways within the PD programme, beyond the prescribed initial assessment and final evaluation. One described using the rubrics midway and commented on the effectiveness of this in refocusing services on the three core rubrics. Many describe returning to the indicators. Providers also found the rubrics document useful "to drive home the point … that teams need to be thinking of our identity, language and culture, in all that they do because they are the first, they are right up front in the rubrics", as a reflective tool to generate discussion about what effective practices might look like; as a formative tool, particularly within the self-review process, that was "useful to help centres plan … their programmes" and to promote further reading.

Adaptations

Providers described changing/adapting the rubrics in a variety of ways. Some of these adaptations addressed editorial or layout aspects, such as reversing the numerical order so that five reflected the most effective end of the scale and one the least, changing the layout so that rubrics could be used as a reflective tool with space to write down relevant evidence, and developing forms where separate areas could be individually rated. Other providers made changes in order to develop a service-particular version, took ideas from the rubrics and wove them into their "own way of working in a way that is going to be user friendly for our centres" or developed activities to promote engagement with the rubrics:

> Where people were sitting around tables with the cards, they are coloured, they are moving, touching them, they are talking….They really say after that first meeting 'this has been so good because it gets us to see the big picture. And it gets us to evaluate where we sit.'

The second edition

Discussions showed PD provider reactions to the rubrics and use of them continue to evolve. One spoke of now feeling "much more comfortable … and much more confident" in using them with centres. Others acknowledged their initial resistance to the rubrics; "but some of that

resistance was good because we moved to the second version of them." Three commented positively on the second version: "those rough edges have been rubbed off a bit". It was "much easier to work with [and] ….some of the things in there are a little bit clearer". Another said: "we as facilitators felt really good taking it back in and really going through each of those indicators because … if you read the indicators, it is sort of flowing through a lot more so it's much easier to keep the focus alive." She added: 'I think the rubrics have really helped focus teachers on the outcomes for children."

Providers' own use of the rubrics

Several described finding the rubrics useful themselves. One said: "They have been useful because I do the report writing and we almost monitor it all the time after every session. [Facilitator name] comes back from facilitation and discusses it 'I wonder how that fits in that particular… in terms of progress'". Another commented "It's also a good reflective tool for us too as providers. We can see our journey". A third acknowledged it was useful "for helping you to prioritize what PD you're going to deliver by working through the system and seeing where extra support is needed".

Other comments about the rubrics

There were a number of other comments about the rubrics; when a point was made by more than one provider that is indicated. (Points relating to the rubrics as an effective tool for evaluating the impact of PD are discussed in later in this chapter, Evaluation Question 16).

- The deficit nature of the rubrics, including "some of the wording and terminology". The negative quality is seen as particularly problematic when the provider is trying to nurture the relationship with the team. (4 comments)

- The order of the rubrics, listing from worst to best (i.e., 1 not 5 should be the best) (2 comments)

- More indicators needed: "there's whole sections with no indicators beside them so how are they supposed to know what it looks like"; "in some cases they have 1, 3 and 5 described and you fill in the gaps for 2 and 4 but in the latest one they don't even have 3 sometimes" (2 comments)

- Some of the indicators are very broad; for example the literacy indicator.

- Too many: "I think one of the problems with the rubrics, because all programmes were measuring against A, B and C and the PD focus one as well, there were four sets of rubrics. I think that was problematic."

- Language is a barrier

- The unrecognised significance of a one-point shift: "How much is a one point shift? And I find at the end I go back and up and down and I go from five to two and I'm back up to a three and then I move to a four and essentially I've only done a shift of one point but over that period of time I've actually shifted myself around. That significant-ness between a one point shift is probably quite massive because the rubrics don't tell us how much energy goes into shifting one point"

- The rubrics should be aligned with the competencies set out in *Tataiako* and with aims, goals and objectives of *Ka hikitia*

- Multiplicity of identities/singularity of terms: "I think one of the things that we questioned particularly was the singularity of the terms in the rubrics and in other documents … the multiplicity of identities and languages and cultures is something the teachers kept feeding back to us"

- Leadership: "the way that we do leadership … the rubrics probably aren't so useful. Because our leadership is about meeting them one-on-one, mentoring". Also, "Leadership of teaching and learning. …the content of that programme is diverse." (2 comments)

- Literacy and numeracy: "a whole cultural dimension of literacy and numeracy missing"

- Transition to school: many of the indicators are quite specific and therefore easy to work with. "The great thing about transitions is, once you've done them, you're way up. It's not like some of the other ones, where … you'd have to wait a year to see all those things change."

ONLINE SURVEY

Services' descriptions of their use of the rubrics provide some insight into how PD providers are using the document. As the quantitative data in Table 8.1 (see Question 13 earlier in this chapter) showed, 22.6% of respondents made frequent/constant use of the rubrics as part of their PD programme, but 35.6% were either unaware of them or did not use them at all. Services' qualitative responses to the survey questions 'What have you found most helpful about using rubrics in your PD programme?' (N=125) and 'What have you found unhelpful when using the rubrics in your PD programme?' (N=98) provide further indications of how providers are using the MoE document.

While some issues in PD providers' use of the rubrics are identified by respondents, these need to be considered in the context that 40 of the 177 responding services reported using the rubrics either a great deal or all the time, and that for every rubric the majority of respondents found them either very or quite helpful (see Table 8.2in Question 15 below). Such figures indicate many PD facilitators are making effective use of the rubrics with many services.

Four of the 125 responses describing what services found most helpful about using the rubrics emphasised the positive role of the PD facilitator. Comments included:

> Made us aware of what we didn't know. This was supported though by the discussions with our facilitator as we probably wouldn't have identified our gaps to the same extent had we not unpacked with her.

Further insight into services' perception of the facilitators' role with regard to the rubrics comes from the 98 responses to the question of what services found unhelpful when using the rubrics. Twelve responses indicated they had not been used, including one: "PD provider was not knowledgeable with the use of the rubric therefore the teams were not exposed to the rubric". Responses also provide critique of how some PD facilitators have used them. Six responses suggested services were expected to complete the initial assessment independently. Often it was clear the document had been posted out with no clear instructions: "They were merely sent to us and directed to complete them and send them back!!!"

Seven responses indicated they had been used only at the start of the PD. However this may merely reflect the MoE instruction that rubrics be used at the start and end of the PD programme; only three of these comments came from services that had either finished their PD programme, or were close to finishing. Comments included:

> It was something [facilitator name] gave us at the beginning of our PD and we have not been over it again or been asked to work with it. It was not clearly explained to me what I was to do with it. I have just flicked through it and will definitely go through it again. Thanks

Two indicated the rubrics had not been shared with the teaching team: "We need to be more familiar as a team as the teachers leading this PD had the knowledge around the rubrics".

CASE STUDIES

The case studies provided only limited further insight into how PD providers have been using the rubrics, but reaffirmed there is considerable variation about when and how the rubrics are used, and the extent of the facilitator's involvement in the rubric discussion process. For more detail see discussion in Question 15 below.

Evaluation question 15: In what ways have services been using the rubrics?

Beyond references to services rating themselves on the rubrics at the entry and exit phases of the PD, provider reports give no information on how services have been using the rubrics, although it is clear many services found the rubrics document challenging to work with initially. One consequence of this was some services recognised that they had initially over-assessed themselves.

Provider interviews give some insight into how services are using the rubrics, particularly in relation to: their reactions to the rubrics, the impact the rubrics have had on the focus of their PD, and their awareness of the need to provide evidence to support their evaluations.

Reactions to the rubrics

There were references to services being resistant to using the rubrics initially with one provider commenting: "They don't like it though, it's too much work. And the scale model nobody likes, they are rated from 1 to 5". However, it seemed most services had come to accept – and at times even "really enjoyed" – engaging with the rubrics. This may be because it is now a more familiar document and/or because facilitators are becoming increasingly skilled in supporting teachers in engaging with the document (see earlier discussion in Evaluation Question 14 'Introducing the rubrics to services' in this chapter).

Services overrating themselves

There were repeated references to services initially overrating themselves (for more detail see Evaluation Question 14), and then re-assessing themselves, sometimes downwards, as they became more familiar with the indicators, more reflective about their own practices, and more comfortable with the facilitator.

Rubrics influencing the choice of PD focus

Engagement with the rubrics is reported to have influenced the direction of many services' PD focus. Some services selected their focus after working with the rubrics; others changed the topic they had previously chosen:

> One of our centres had quite clearly in their mind what they wanted to do for their research question … and they said that as they went through the rubrics they realized that there was actually an area that they needed to look at… an area of need that they perceived in their centres and it made them shift their thinking.

Another provider described how the rubrics heightened teachers' awareness of language, culture and identity: "And then they sort of built that into their self-review".

Providing evidence

There are multiple references to teachers being challenged (or challenging themselves) to provide evidence of a shift in relation to a rubrics indicator:

> 'Show me evidence.' That's where the evidence came in. So we wouldn't say 'Oh no, you're not that.' We would say 'Okay, let's put together the evidence that shows that you are doing these things, that you are each of these things.' And then they could easily see for themselves, 'Oh actually… our policy's from 2004, so sure we have one, but we're not using it' … The evidence gathering is the more tricky part for some centres isn't it? Some are very good at collecting evidence and some I've worked with not so good. For instance one centre I've worked with had a great big folder and each tab in the folder was a different part of the rubric that they were looking for and when we met to discuss the rubric, they had a whole empty tab and that was around culture and ide-- – Māori ways of, it was the literacy one. And so straightaway they—"this is an area we need some extra support in".

In identifying how services are using the rubrics, the online survey provides useful data regarding the proportion of services that are aware of and/or using the rubrics.

The extent to which services are using the rubrics

Twenty-three per cent (N=40) of the total respondents (N=177) to the question about the rubrics reported using those rubrics relevant to their PD programme either 'A great deal' or 'All the time', and a further 42% (N=74) used it 'A little'. Analysis by PD programme indicated there was little variation between programme groups. However, while the figures are small, there are indications that those services that have been in PD programmes for longer are more likely to be using the relevant rubrics: 27% (N=28) of those who were close to finishing, had finished, or had begun a second round of PD (N=102) used the documents 'A great deal' or 'All the time' and 43% (N=44) used them 'A little'.

Survey data affirmed previous findings that not all services are aware of and/or using the rubrics in their PD programmes. Twenty-one per cent of services (N=88) reported they were not aware of the rubrics. Surprisingly, lack of awareness of the rubrics did not seem to be strongly associated with length of involvement in the PD programme: 16% (N=4) of those who had just started their PD programme were 'Not aware' of the rubrics compared with 29% (N=14) of those in the middle of their PD programme and 20% (N=20) of those close to the end of their programme, had finished, or had begun a second round of PD.

Also relevant to the question of how many services are engaging with the rubrics are those who report their use of the rubrics as 'Not at all': 14% of the total respondents to this question (N=25) chose this option. Further analysis shows this included 32% (N=8) of those who had just started their PD programme, 14% (N=7) of those in the middle of their PD programme, and 10% (N=10) of those close to the end of their PD programme, who had finished, or had begun a second round of PD.

Collectively these results indicate about one-third of respondents to the survey were unfamiliar with the rubrics document. Not surprisingly, nearly half of those services that identify as 'Just started our programme' have the highest rates – nearly half this group (48%) were in this category. More concerning are the 43% (N=21) of respondents who are in the middle of their programme, and the 29% (N=30) who are close to completing and/or have completed their PD programme. Analysis by PD programme type showed there were respondents in all PD programmes who were not aware of the rubrics and/or had not used the document at all.

How useful services found the rubrics

Respondents were asked to indicate how useful they found each rubric to help them focus on improving the practice (see Table 8.2). More than half those responding to this question identified each rubric as either 'Very helpful' or 'Quite helpful' – with a range from 57.6% of respondents for Rubric F up to 66.4% for Rubric I. Rubric F was also identified as 'Not at all helpful' by more people (N=11) than any other rubric. It is interesting that 92 respondents offered feedback on Rubric B1 given that the Providers' rubric reporting indicates no service chose this as their focus area (see Table 4.25 in Chapter 4 relating to Evaluation Question 1).

Table 8.2: Services' assessment of how helpful each rubric used in their PD programme was in focusing them on improving practices

Rubric	Very helpful	Quite helpful	A little helpful	Not at all helpful	Total
Rubric A: Parent and whanau engagement	22 19.5%	49 43.4%	55 31%	7 6.2%	113
Rubric B: Effective teaching for Māori children	16 14.8%	53 49.1%	31 28.7%	8 7.4%	108
Rubric B1: Effective teaching for Pasifika children	19 20.6%	34 37%	30 32.6%	9 9.8%	92
Rubric C: Educational leadership	19 18.4%	46 44.7%	31 30.1%	7 6.8%	103
Rubric D: Literacy	25 28.1%	33 37.1%	23 25.8%	8 9%	89
Rubric E: Mathematics	17 20.5%	32 38.5%	25 30.1%	9 10.8%	83
Rubric F: Infants and toddlers	13 16.3%	33 41.3%	23 28.8%	11 13.8%	80
Rubric G: Transition to school	24 28.6%	31 36.9%	23 27.4%	6 7.1%	84
Rubric H: Transitions (into and within service)	18 21%	35 40.5%	23 27%	10 11.5%	86
Rubric I: Social competence	22 23.2%	41 43.2%	24 25.3%	8 8.4%	95

Analysis of the survey data by programme enrolment reveals very similar results, with no single rubric identified as significantly more or less useful by respondents from the different programmes. Overall between half and three-quarters of respondents found individual rubrics either 'Very helpful' or 'Quite helpful', ranging from 55% for Rubric B1 to 75% for Rubric I of programme one respondents compared with 50% for Rubric B1 to 74% for Rubric E of respondents enrolled in programme 1\one plus Programme two and/or three, and 50% for Rubrics E and F to 73% for Rubric B1 of respondents in the two national programmes.

Services were also asked to give examples of what they found helpful or unhelpful about using rubrics in their PD programme. There were 125 responses, the majority of which were positive. Twelve respondents indicated they were unaware of the rubrics (covered in discussion of Evaluation Question 14); five were critical of the document (see discussion below).

What did services find helpful about using the rubrics in their PD programme?

The 108 responses indicating the rubrics had been helpful ranged from very general comments – "Excellent", "Very helpful" – through to more detailed feedback on how services had used the rubrics. The most frequent themes were: to evaluate the current programme and practices; a stimulus for reflection; a stimulus for discussion; providing clear indicators and goals; and a tool for tracking and evaluating the PD journey. Many responses referred to more than one of these aspects. Responses came from all PD programme groups, and from services at all stages of their PD programme.

Evaluating current programme and practices

Twenty responses emphasised use of the rubrics as a tool to evaluate current practices and programme. These included: "It made us recognise areas that we thought were 'ok' were in

need of development"; and "As a manager made me aware how my team viewed being culturally responsive… All were about resources rather than knowledge and understanding".

A stimulus for reflection

Six responses identified the rubrics as a stimulus to reflect on practices. One described her use of it "as a tool for reflective practice" and how she is "incorporating it into the programme as a constant." Another wrote:

> An excellent way of engaging staff in reflective practice and enabling teachers to identify their own next steps. It is a particularly good way to support those teachers who do not wish to change their outdated practices. The fact that they are supported by up-to-date research makes them a highly effective tool. I have now developed my own as a result of using them.

A stimulus for discussion

Eight responses highlighted discussion that emerged from engagement with the rubrics; "robust conversations about what we recognise as valuable about our focus areas". Another wrote: "I think this is where it is most useful – promoting professional discussion and highlighting the direction for professional learning". Some responses focused in particular on the benefits of team-wide discussion: "It makes us realize whether we are all operating on the same page". One described the process they had followed as a team:

> We … had all the team contribute to each one by putting them up in the staff room one at a time and everyone had to choose where we fitted as well as evidence to support their choice. We then took this to a team meeting where we came to a shared decision where we sat based on further group discussion and then this altered a little further after facilitator meeting. A great process!

Providing clear indicators, goal setting

Sixteen responses referred to using the rubrics to identify areas for improvement and to set goals for PD; "Realising what level we were at on the rubrics and what we had to do to improve that level". The indicators were identified as a useful tool in identifying the steps services needed to take. They were described as "achievable accountable indicators" and "small do-able steps".

To track and evaluate progress

Services identified the rubrics as a useful tool in tracking and evaluating progress through the PD programme: "A useful frame to reflect on at the start, mid-point and end of our project; helped us to develop a view as to our own performance and to track progress over the year" (for further detail, see discussion for Question 16 later in this chapter).

Four responses indicated services had adapted the MoE rubrics: "The idea of the rubrics was most useful and we adapted the Ministry ones for our own purpose and made them easier to understand and subsequently track our progress."

Other comments in individual responses included that the rubrics were an effective tool in self-review; that the infant and toddler rubric was helpful, but the social competency rubric was "confusing"; and that the rubrics provided "A wider and colourful way of understanding our Māori and Pacific children and their families".

What did services find unhelpful about using the rubrics in their PD programme?

The 98 responses to the survey question 'What have you found unhelpful when using the rubrics in your PD programme?' included nine "N/a", five who were unaware of the rubrics, and five who indicated they were not sufficiently familiar with them to comment. A further five indicated "nothing" was unhelpful. Collectively, the detailed critical comments from this survey question provide an indication of factors that made use of the rubrics document problematic in some services. However, the comments also provide evidence of these services engaging thoughtfully with the document. Five themes emerge in those responses: the rubrics were

initially confusing; the document is difficult to understand; challenging to use as an evaluation tool; time-consuming to use; and does not always reflect the quality, philosophy and/or practices of the service. A number of other specific points are also noted. Responses came from across all programmes.

Initial confusion with the Rubrics document

Five services reported initially finding the rubrics confusing. At times it is clear this relates to how they were presented to the service (see also earlier discussion in this chapter on Question 14). For example:

> When we first looked at the rubrics we thought we had to answer every section… We feel that when you are focusing on a particular subject, e.g. social competence, you should only receive these sections – it gives staff more focus on what is required from them. Also you are not trying to fit answers into areas that are not applicable.

Difficult to understand

A number focused on the rubrics as being "difficult": "Our team found it quite challenging to use the rubrics and we ended up putting it aside and using it only as a rough guide rather than a working document" and "Teachers need to be trained in understanding and using the rubrics". Seven comments related specifically to difficulty in comprehending the rubrics. These included: "Difficult to follow concepts", and "We found it a bit overbearing and the language used was not easily understood as you could take the meanings in several ways". One service suggested there should be "more in-depth work understanding them before you use them"; another plans "to visit rubrics once a fortnight to get a better understanding". Five responses identified the 'wordiness' of the rubrics was a particular difficulty. Comments included that they were: "very wordy", and having "too much information to take in".

Challenging to use as an evaluation tool

Ten responses related to difficulty in using the rubrics as an evaluation tool. These included the challenges in trying to apply a quantitative measure to qualitative indictors of practice: services found it difficult "Trying to quantify qualities" and "We felt the ticking simplicity was not comprehensive enough to represent the wide and diverse views of where we, as a Centre, are". Another centre commented that they found the rubrics to be a:

> Rather broad measure with only five levels – even though we felt we progressed a lot over the year, we didn't feel we were able to jump whole grades in all areas (e.g. from 'consolidating effectiveness' up to 'highly effective').

Some services were unsure where to place themselves on the scales, and found the overlaps between both rubrics and indicators challenging. One service felt that the "grading system seems very deficit based" whilst, conversely, another commented "They were a little too easy to score highly we thought". Whilst one responding service found the "positioning scale" helpful, they commented that "no comparisons could be made with other 'like' centres, nor was there guidance about how to reach higher levels of achievement". A service engaged in programme one commented that: "The rubrics didn't cater for leadership effectively. It was very hard to distinguish where to put yourself as the top one. … I found it was lacking a pre-stage of development before the top one". Challenges in evaluating the service as a team included relying "on the subjectivity of one or three key individuals engaged in the project…" and difficulties in reaching agreement due to diverse views within the team.

Time-consuming

Eight responses identified the rubric process as time consuming. For example: "Time it takes to go through the work".

Not reflecting the particular service

Four responses noted that the rubrics did not match the service's special quality, philosophy and/or current programme and practices. For example: "We struggled to apply them to our

Playcentre setting" and "Not aligned to our philosophy, e.g. infants and toddlers goals or statements are far wide of ours, not aligned to true infant toddler needs".

Other comments

Other issues were raised by only one or two respondents. Two responses related to the presentation of the document. One identified them as "not user friendly"; another described the layout as "clumsy. Lots of words in silly little narrow columns. It could be much better designed." Two services reported negative reactions from others to the rubrics. One wrote: "I have found when I have wanted to share the rubrics with a local primary school for example the response was not positive. … See them as academic claptrap perhaps?" The second comment was: "ERO used our rubrics against us". However, we note that in response to a later question, another service wrote: "Soon after our PD, we had our ERO visit. The ERO officers queried about the rubrics during our PD and were quite impressed to know the in-depth knowledge we had gained from our PD … Due to this PD we were able to get an excellent review for our centre".

One further issue raised was: "We were conscious of not allowing the rubric to act as a framework or test of what we should or should not focus upon. We didn't want it to limit what we focused upon because the PD became an unfolding journey".

CASE STUDIES

In the interviews, conducted as part of the case study visits, teachers were asked about use of the rubrics with their service, including who was involved. Their responses covered the ways they had used the rubrics at the start of, and during/at the end of their PD programme.

Engaging with the rubrics at the start of their PD

Interviews with teachers and/or managers reaffirmed the survey finding that there is considerable variation in the ways in which services are introduced to, and engage with the rubrics at the start of their PD programme. In six services (seven teams) all the teachers had been involved in the rating and in four services some had been involved. Two services reported the rubrics had been sent to them; in one service one teacher had engaged with the process of rating, in the other no one had engaged. Four services had not seen the document. Both the services in the national programmes reported the whole team had been involved in working with the rubrics. One of the two services working with the provider who has elected not to use the rubrics with services (see earlier discussion of Evaluation Question 14) had worked with the rubrics, the other had not.

Among services where all teachers had been involved, different approaches were taken. In some cases it was clear the facilitator was also present – but not always:

> Initially two teachers went through it and did a lot of discussion between themselves and notes on it and then they brought it to the team …. So they had discussion, made comments and brought back to us and we had further comments, about you know, whether we agreed with what they were saying or looking at it from a different point of view … that is when we discussed some aspects with one of the other centres [in the cluster]—'What's your understanding of that'? …. Especially at the beginning we did it more often because everyone was like 'What is this rubrics business?' and how to understand it and get your head around it. So relationships with other centres grew as well.

In some contexts an individual or small group completed the task. Examples given included: the supervisor, the supervisor plus facilitator, a small group plus the facilitator, and in a home-based network the team leader, visiting teachers and facilitator. In one case, the team was involved after the rubric had been completed: "Actually it was done by F the Supervisor and then we discussed it at a meeting, things that were lacking".

For one service, where the rubrics had been part of the documentation posted out before the PD began, one teacher said the rubrics had been used "in [the] beginning to gauge position then used again to gauge progress. Were able to measure where the centre was at on the rubrics." However the case study report indicates other teachers felt overwhelmed by the amount of documentation received, the rubrics had not been understood, and so the usefulness was "questionable". Another service received the rubrics in the same way and did not engage with them. Here the comments were:

> Rubric made no difference. There was far too much paper work. We needed to find time to read the written material, engage with it and internalise it. It was like being bombarded by the written word and it was confusing. We struggled to get our heads around the paper work especially considering we had other things we had to do. There was no mana in the paper work.

Engaging with the rubrics during and at the end of the PD

Eight of the services had begun their PD programmes in 2011, four had completed their PD, while others were continuing. However only five teams (four services) described using the rubrics to re-evaluate themselves. One service did a midway evaluation as well as a final one and followed the same process as they had at the beginning of doing it individually, and then collating to gather a group score. A second service noted "There was a difference in our rating from when we began, some areas we still need to improve but we could see that we had improved". A teacher in a third service is "looking forward" to seeing where they are as she feels they have made "great progress".

Responses gave further insight into how services are finding the rubrics useful:

- An influence on the chosen PD focus.

- A stimulus for reflection: "when [we] looked at the rubrics it really touched on what we needed and all of the questions, the documentation, [it] was all there. It was useful where we looked at ourselves."

- In goal setting: "Where we are and where we want to go. Now I can see the difference it made but at the time it wasn't useful at all. Just ticking a box"

- A stimulus for in-depth evaluation: "At first when the team saw the rubrics they scored themselves highly … However after a significant duration of PD they actually critiqued their practice and realised that they were never at that level and still were not there."

- In charting progress through the PD

- A tool to evaluate the PD journey: "Well we did evaluate, things that were working for us, and we came up with positive feedback that it does work".

One teacher commented that whilst it was useful they did steer away from it in the sense of not following it step by step in regards to adapting their practices (For a discussion of services' critique of the rubrics, see discussion of Evaluation Question 16 below).

Evaluation question 16: How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services' practices?

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

In most PD provider reports the intention to use the MoE rubrics to assess the PD programme was explicit, but this was often in combination with other forms of assessment such as observations, parent evaluations, or an online survey. There was also variation in how the rubrics were being used to assess the impact of PD, including:

- An independent process completed by the service
- A collaborative process involving facilitator and service
- Services completing final rubric evaluations at a seminar.

Rubric reporting in the milestone reports shows most services perceived the PD process had been successful. The majority of services exiting from PD programmes so far have shown a movement on rubrics ratings of between 1 and 2 points. However, there are variations in how PD providers report on rubric ratings and quantitative reports of rubric shifts are not equally accessible in the provider reports (see discussion in Chapter 4 of Evaluation Question 1).

A number of points emerge in the provider reports in relation to the assessment of the impact of PD on services' practices:

- The most significant changes were recorded for centres who initially were rated as minimally effective or developing effectiveness

- Services frequently over-rated themselves in the initial process

- Evidence of shifts backwards and forwards for services that initially gave themselves a mid-ranking

- Where services did not shift their rating, often they had improved on the descriptors within a level.

A number of services were not willing to re/engage with the rubrics and/or to share their final rankings which left some providers with no comparative data for them. One provider planned for final rubric evaluations to be completed when services met together for final seminar presentations, but found it difficult to obtain the completed evaluations. A similar difficulty was found by another provider; approximately one-quarter of centres in their Leadership programme, and 5 of the 31 services in the targeted programme did not complete the final rubric despite follow-up emails and phone calls. These difficulties suggest that, even at the end of the PD, a level of facilitator support through the rubric process may be appropriate.

PROVIDER INTERVIEWS

The provider interviews did not include the quantitative detail of the milestone reports. Here, when providers spoke of success, there were no references to rubric ratings, but rather descriptions of qualitative changes within services. This discussion summarises providers' thoughts on the use of rubrics as a tool to assess the impact of the PD; while it draws on a number of interviews it relies particularly on detail from one provider (Previous discussion in Evaluation Question 14 includes detailed descriptions of how providers used the rubrics with services).

All PD providers described using the rubrics as an initial assessment tool with services, although for one the rating against the rubrics is done by the facilitator after team discussions in relation to the indicators. Another provider acknowledged her initial hesitation about giving teachers the document: "We had a bit of debate about whether we would provide them with copies of the rubrics because I didn't want them to be some kind of, if you just do this checklist

then we'll be getting it right for the Ministry." Only one provider referred to services not returning completed rubrics ratings as a difficulty.

The challenges for facilitators in making the initial evaluation of a service were acknowledged:

> As a facilitator if I went into that process of rating them right at the beginning of a relationship I would just be doing a superficial sweep. I couldn't do a really good job at that stage.

> The time it takes to really do a good job with rubrics, I don't think if I'm personally honest with it, I don't think I've ever done a really good job with all the rubrics, that's the hardest thing… One of the things was that to do the rubrics you actually have to have a substantial amount of time if you are talking about centre programmes, with each centre.

Services overrating themselves was a frequently identified 'issue' (see earlier discussion of Question 14 'Services overrating themselves'). This had/could lead to many services appearing to make no progress, or even to move backwards as a result of their PD journey:

> So they've rated themselves, it shows up where your centres sometimes see themselves staying on the same rating as they did at the beginning or they've slipped backwards or only made a tiny wee move forwards. That's when they come back to the job and see 'actually we shouldn't have rated ourselves there in the first place, it wasn't accurate, that's not a true assessment' but that's after a bit of learning.

Interestingly, while this was identified as an 'issue', providers appeared to be much more engaged with the qualitative signs of progress and success they were seeing.

Not all providers have used the rubrics in final assessments yet. Some are assuming services are with their programme for the three years, others are rolling over services from phase 1 to phase 2. For those that have used it in a final evaluation, there were positive comments about the process: "certainly the rubrics are showing a shift, raw shifts in the settings." Another commented:

> It really is a good indicator of change because it does give you a start point and then when you're coming to the end of the work you can re-do it and you can see a shift and sometimes it's a shift backwards depending on where they started and sometimes it's a shift forward.

There was also discussion about some of the difficulties for services in assessing change:

> I know that centres will look at the list of evidence they might have put down in the first place about what they actually did do in practice, what it looks like, that helps them to recognise change in practice but it's not always really clear where you put that change, does that change go one rubric higher than what we were originally or does it still fit in the essence of that rubric.

A number of comments related to the reliability of the rubrics, and their effectiveness as an evaluative tool:

- Difficulty of giving a single figure rating when practices may fall across several rankings; open to personal interpretation.

- Difficulty of scoring a service where each session can be quite diverse: "you might give a different number to every day of the week because you have different teams on every day."

- Difficulty of using a quantitative approach in a complex qualitative context: "it's very hard to rate the complexity with fairness and so you end up taking a very broad brush approach and then you have to really question the reliability of them…. Although … I guess the reliability is partly to do with how you finish the process."

- "And the other thing about it too is that change is messy not linear."

- "There are too many holes in them … in some cases they have 1, 3 and 5 described and you fill in the gaps for 2 and 4 but in the latest one they don't even have 3 sometimes, so they go from a description of 1, a description of 5 and you have to rate somewhere in

between. … my feeling is they're a pretty blunt instrument and, in fact, don't necessarily reflect the change."

- More useful as a formative tool than an evaluative tool: "I guess the Ministry wasn't looking so much for the values, they were looking for the shift … we found them useful as a formative tool. The content of them is useful to help centres plan, plan their programmes. But we didn't find them useful as an evaluative tool."

- "My feeling about a rubric is that it's a research tool and actually researchers need to be trained to use the tool if you're going to use it effectively across the nation. And at the moment it feels like it's a very wide flexible tool".

Finally, a suggestion of how else the Ministry might assess the effectiveness of PD programmes:

> I think we all appreciate the fact that what the Ministry is trying to do and needs to do is to show that professional development makes a difference …. My overall view … is that actually we should take some money out of all these contracts, put it into significant research and independent people can visit, not one or two services, you can't monitor or moderate what's happening in professional learning unless you do a significant portion of the services at the beginning, the middle and at the end. And then you'll get a picture of what's really happening. … you'd get all the nuances, the significant things that are happening inside communities that are changing the professional learning opportunities.

ONLINE SURVEY

The online survey provided insight into services' perspectives on using the rubrics to assess the impact of the PD. A theme in responses to the survey question 'What have you found most helpful about using rubrics in your PD programme' was that the rubrics were valuable in tracking and evaluating progress through the PD programme. Six of the 125 responses specifically identified the document as helpful in this way: "A useful frame to reflect on at the start, mid-point and end of our project, helped us to develop a view as to our own performance and to track progress over the year".

Many more responses identified the usefulness of the rubrics in evaluating practices and setting a goal at the beginning of the PD programme – 16 responses referred to services' use of the rubrics to identify areas for improvement and to set goals for PD. This may reflect the fact that 50 of respondents describe themselves as having just started, or in the middle of their PD, or perhaps that PD facilitators are using the rubrics more extensively at the start of the PD programmes. The indicators were identified as a useful tool in identifying the steps services needed to take: "Used highly effective outcomes as a basis for determining desired outcomes from our project".

CASE STUDIES

This discussion is structured into two sections. The first considers the few comments made about the role of rubrics in assisting services to assess the impact of the PD on their practices. The second explores aspects of the document and/or its use that were identified as 'difficulties' by services.

How have the rubrics assisted services to assess the impact of the PD on their practices?

As noted in the discussion of Question 15 earlier in this chapter, only five teams [four services] had re-evaluated themselves at the end of the PD, and one service had also done a midway evaluation. Their comments on the process were relatively general. For example, one supervisor found the rubrics "useful as an assessment tool on the focus areas of numeracy and literacy" but the teachers in that team were not familiar with the document. Teachers from two other services commented: "There was a difference in our rating from when we began, some areas we still need to improve but we could see that we had improved" and "It made more sense at the end—assessing what we had done. We could see it more then."

A manager considered the rubrics were "not helpful" because the two teams in that service had overrated themselves initially – "scoring one for themselves in every section. However when they looked back they saw that they are only on the way to one now and that they were nowhere near last year!". Comments from one of the teachers gives insight into the depth of reflection such overrating might lead to. She reported that after a significant duration of PD they critiqued their practice and realised they were never at that level and still were not there. She said they "really read between the lines and scored themselves very carefully", finding that for some aspects they "were at one" however for others they "were at three to four".

A unique comment related to confidentiality of ratings from a participant who works in a multi-service complex: "The staff told us where we ranked us. … The other centres could see what our assessment was. I would like more privacy around this because if I rank it too highly we don't want to compare to others".

Aspects of the rubrics identified as 'difficulties'

In the interviews conducted as part of the case study visits, teachers/managers were asked: 'What suggestions do you have for improving the rubrics?' A variety of ideas were put forward, and these reiterate issues identified by survey respondents. Unpacking those issues seems a useful step to ensuring the rubrics remain a useful tool.

Introduction of the rubrics

The rubrics were said to be "hard to use", "took a while to grasp", and teachers spoke of needing "a little bit of help to understand its purpose". One group recalled "they all fell about laughing as they tried to do it". It was suggested the document needed to be introduced more carefully to services, and with better explanations and support. An example from case study report was:

> What I am saying is that it is difficult. I don't know how you would do it differently necessarily. But maybe some more supporting notes at the beginning saying this is how it works, you know. I guess it was realising that we would be either in one or two or three. You are sort of reading through all these things. I think that the layout did not read too well. I think probably that's what it was.

Services who reported receiving the rubrics in the post, along with other documentation relating to the PD, had the strongest negative reactions to the rubrics.

Other comments relating to the rubrics and/or their use focused on their use as an evaluation tool; their language and presentation; and the need to adapt them for use in different contexts. Similar issues regarding the use of the rubrics as an evaluative tool were evident in the case study interviews as were previously noted from the online survey responses, including the challenge of applying the rubrics to their context and the need for more specific indicators and references to assist services in determining where they sat on each scale. One service queried whether the rubrics were "a suitable tool to measure progress [when] understandings of it are limited?" whilst another commented that the rubrics were not able to capture the complexity of their work and their development:

> Under some scores they were doing really well in some things yet struggling with others and felt that the general numbers for both were not very representative of the development that was occurring as a team—instead making them label what they had done.

Whilst the services quoted above placed an emphasis on a more nuanced, detailed approach that could capture the complexity of their service, other case study services provided feedback that the language used was "technical", "very difficult to comprehend and connect to their own practices", and needed to be "more concise and clear and shorter" and set out in a "straightforward way". Finally, the most frequent response to the rubrics is summed by this comment: "We had to do it so we did, but then we just got on with other things."

Chapter summary: Use of the rubrics by PD providers and services

Level 1: Participants' learning

- **How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practices to improve learning outcomes for children?**

- **In what ways have services been using the rubrics?**

Working with the rubrics has contributed to attitudinal changes for teachers through 'raising the bar' on what effective practice looks like, heightening teacher awareness of areas where their practices may be less effective, and provoking reflection on current practices. Including rubrics A, B and C re-emphasised for services that culture, language and identity, working with parents/whānau, and leadership should *always* be important elements within their programmes and practices [Provider interviews, Online survey].

Learning for teachers from participating in the process of using the rubrics and initiating a subsequent self-review includes understanding: the process of evaluation, of establishing a goal, developing an action plan, and of identifying how they might find the evidence to assess/demonstrate their increasing effectiveness. For many services these were new concepts [Provider interviews, Online survey].

There was some resistance to initially engaging with the rubrics, which reflects the fact that they were a new and unfamiliar tool for teachers – and also for PD providers [All data sources]. Therefore there was little initial awareness of the scope of the task or the level of thoughtfulness required to engage in a realistic evaluation, and some services were given the task of evaluating themselves against the rubrics with little information and/or support [Online survey, Case studies].

The depth of teachers' attitudinal change is reflected in the number of services that have not altered – or may even have moved backwards—on their rubric rating post PD. Factors leading to this apparent lack of progress include: teachers' increased awareness of what constitutes 'Highly effective'; a more realistic recognition of their own developing effectiveness through the PD journey; a greater awareness of the process of evaluation; and a willingness to engage with the process more honestly with their now-familiar facilitator [Provider reports, Provider interviews].

However, despite the providers' emphasis on the rubrics, it is clear that about one-third of services engaged in the PD programmes are either not using and/or are not aware of the rubrics [Online survey, Case studies].

Level 2: Organisational and structural support

- **How have the PD providers been using the rubrics?**

- **How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services?**

PD providers' contracts required that they used the rubrics at the start and completion of the PD programme with each service in order to assess the effectiveness of the programme. The fact that around a third of services responding to the online survey were either not aware of the rubrics or had not used them at all indicates some services – or provider/s – may not be prioritising teachers' engagement with them. It is also not always clear which rubrics providers are using with services [Provider reports, Provider interviews].

Service-related factors that support engagement with the rubrics are: management involvement and support, allotted time for the task; strategies for involving the whole team; and a person who understands the task and is willing to take leadership of the process [Provider reports, Provider interviews].

Potential barriers within the service are: lack of support from management; rubrics evaluation completed with no/very limited teacher involvement; no allotted time; evening meetings which clash with other commitments for staff; staff members not seeing such tasks as part of their teaching role – particularly when it involves attending in their own unpaid time; high numbers of unqualified staff who may lack pedagogical knowledge; and high numbers of relievers who may be less committed [All data sources].

Factors which support providers' effectiveness in using the rubrics with services include: PD providers' support for their facilitators' own engagement with the rubrics; thoughtful introduction and use of the rubrics with teachers during the sensitive relationship-building phase of the PD process; joint engagement in the process with the service; and addressing the rubrics at a time when all/most of the team can be present [Provider interviews, Online survey, Case studies]. Some providers have adapted the rubrics to make them more user-friendly, useful, and appropriate for the particular context [Provider reports, Provider interviews].

Several factors which may impede providers' effectiveness in using the rubrics were identified: lack of facilitator familiarity with the document and/or lack of experience in introducing and using them effectively with services; pressure of time – wanting to get on with the PD itself; facilitators not being accessible, or being inflexible in meeting times; working only with clusters and therefore less able to provide service-specific support [Provider reports, Provider interviews, Online survey].

An MoE-related factor which has supported the effectiveness of the rubrics is the willingness to respond to critique; providers are positive about the changes incorporated in the second edition [Provider interviews]. Further suggestions from teachers and providers for improvements to the rubrics documentation focus particularly on it being 'difficult' to understand and to details of the grading system which make it challenging to use as an evaluation tool [Provider interviews, Online survey].

Level 3: Participants' use of new skills and knowledge

- **How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practices to improve learning outcomes for children?**

There is considerable evidence that the rubrics made a significant contribution to the direction and depth of the PD journey for many services. They provoked discussion and reflection among teachers; were a tool with which to evaluate their current programme and practices and identify the gap between their own and the 'highly effective' model; they often influenced a team's choice of focus and goal for their PD programme; and they were the tool with which teams could measure and reflect on progress and affirm achievements. The requirement to engage with rubrics A, B and C re-emphasised for teachers the underlying importance of culture, language and identity, working with parents/whānau and leadership. [Provider reports, Provider interviews, Online survey]. As the discussion of the findings in relation to 'Improving teacher practices' (Chapter 4, Evaluation Questions 1-3) shows, those PD journeys have led to a wide range of positive shifts.

Level 4: Outcomes for children

- **How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practices to improve learning outcomes for children?**

The collective data provides little evidence from either providers or teachers that link the rubrics with shifts in teacher practices that have had a *direct* impact on learning outcomes for children. When services responded to the online question about what they had found most useful about the rubrics, only 7 of the 124 responses made an explicit link to children's learning. There was a similar paucity of examples from the providers. However, there are many examples from both teachers and providers that show the rubrics have contributed to improved teacher practices [All data sources].

Chapter 9: Discussion

This final chapter draws together the key findings presented in the previous chapters in order to assess whether the design and implementation of the PD programmes were meeting the intended outcomes of the programme, and to assess the effectiveness of a targeted approach to the delivery of MoE-funded ECE PD programmes. The chapter is organised, firstly, by the overarching evaluation questions, before a final set of comments.

Changing teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children

There is considerable evidence across the data sources used for this evaluation of teachers and services making qualitative shifts in their practices across the core commonalities and each of the PD focus areas. These range from modest changes in practice to extensive shifts in attitude, knowledge, and practice. A key factor positively influencing changes in practice is the careful integration into programmes of self-review processes and related strategies that promote engagement and reflection. Facilitators also play a critical role in supporting and, at times, challenging teachers to engage in reflective practice. It is evident that effective leadership and supportive management positively influence the amount and degree of change achieved, whilst conversely an absence of these contributes to poorer outcomes from the PD. Overwhelmingly, participants across the three PD programmes have found their PD to be 'Very effective' or 'Effective' in supporting their practice in their focus areas and in supporting them to be critically reflective.

Far less evidence was found that these changes in teachers' and services' practices were improving learning outcomes for children. Several factors contributed to this: firstly, the emphasis on outcomes for children, rather than on teachers' practices, has required a general shift in thinking both for providers and for participants in PD programmes. Whilst there is evidence that most providers have adapted to this shift, and have consistently held this emphasis to the fore in their work with services, it has been considerably more difficult for teachers to adapt. Secondly, many teachers have had to develop their understandings and skills in reflective practice and in assessment and evaluation processes in order to be able to identify learning and to engage with improving learning outcomes for children. Several providers identified that considerable front-loading work on reflection, planning and assessment was required to enable services to engage in evidence-based practice and to articulate children's learning. There were frequent examples of the considerable support given by providers to enable services to improve their assessment practices, for example increasing the detail and complexity of their learning stories, so that children's learning and their teaching practices are visible. Finally, many services have struggled to differentiate between potential and actual learning for children. Focusing on the learning outcomes for children, and how teacher practices and processes are supporting or hindering the achievement of those learning outcomes, is clearly a work in progress. Whilst we would expect to see further progress evident in provider milestone reports over the remainder of the contract period, continued attention to ensuring that teachers' and services' practices are actually improving learning outcomes for children is needed.

We were concerned to see the apparent low rate of improvement in practice or learning outcomes evident for Rubric B *Effective teaching practices for Māori children.* We consider that this is an issue requiring careful monitoring in future to determine whether this is a result of services initially over-rating themselves or being unwilling to engage in effective practices (see also, the discussions on i) valuing children's identity, language and culture and ii) use of the rubrics below)*.* The inclusion of Rubric B1 *Effective teaching practices for Pasifika children* in the second iteration of the rubrics document meant that phase one PD services did not engage with this rubric at the beginning of their programme and there is, therefore, no data available on shifts in practice or learning outcomes for this rubric. Participants' data does, however, reveal that some services have found the focus of this rubric helpful during their programme. We would expect that data relating to Rubric B1 will be available from phase two programmes that will enable evaluation of services' engagement in effective teaching practices for Pasifika children.

Increasing services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture

The core focus on valuing children's identity, language and culture was new for both providers and for services in the current PD contract, and there is evidence of mixed success in achieving this goal mid-way through the contract period. Whilst all providers described how they addressed valuing children's identity, language and culture, only three-quarters of services responding to the survey felt that their programme had supported them 'A great deal' or 'Quite a lot' to be more responsive. Examples given by services of their increased responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture ranged from modest, rather token changes to significant shifts in practice. Variation was also evident in the case study data which revealed that some programmes appeared to have paid little attention to these aspects, some programmes had had a moderate impact, and some programmes had combined with services' commitment and existing practices resulting in significant outcomes.

Whilst providers reported using a range of approaches to support services to be more responsive, shifts in participants' learning were also influenced by their existing knowledge and openness to new learning. Three additional aspects of service capability also appeared to influence whether services became more responsive to children's identity, language and culture: firstly, the commitment of service leaders (pedagogical and managerial) to developing practice in this area; secondly, staff knowledge about New Zealand's bi-cultural heritage and the role of the Treaty of Waitangi, particularly for teachers trained overseas; and thirdly, teachers' existing assessment knowledge as discussed above.

Professional development programmes for kaupapa Māori and Pasifika services

Learning for participants from Immersion Māori and Pasifika was influenced by the ability of their provider to deliver the programme in culturally appropriate ways. There was evidence from the case studies and online survey that Māori and Pasifika Immersion services do not always feel that their specialised PD needs are met, despite the best efforts of providers.

The structure of the current PD contracts does not differentiate between the PD needs of Māori and Pasifika Immersion services and those services who may have high Māori and Pasifika participation but which do not operate from a kaupapa Māori or Pasifika philosophy. It is clear that different skills and knowledge are required for PD that supports non-immersion services to develop in areas such as te reo me ngā tikanga and cultural responsiveness versus the specialised expertise required for working with kaupapa Māori and immersion services.

Data from this evaluation has highlighted the need for more targeted PD provision for kaupapa Māori and Pasifika immersion services built on appropriate protocols and processes that set the scene for professional growth. Without this Māori and Pasifika services are disadvantaged – there is evidence that these services were not always able to engage with the PD work in a way that encouraged development of professional knowledge that could then be related to practice. We contend that the foundation of PD programmes for these services needs to be integrally built on Māori or Pasifika values and understandings, beyond what many PD providers can support. Given that there are such Māori and Pasifika services located across the country, the provision of PD programmes for these services is needed across the country, not just in specific geographical regions.

Thus, we suggest the Ministry consider structuring future PD programmes differently, providing two parallel strands of PD:

- One for kaupapa Māori services focusing on areas of importance for Māori (e.g., Te Whatu Pokeka) or for Pasifika services focusing on areas of importance for Pasifika communities

- One for non-Immersion services focusing on te reo, tikanga, and Mana Whenua.

Use of the targeted approach to involve and engage services in PD

The data indicate that many providers have made exemplary efforts to engage services from the targeted communities in their professional development programmes, to good effect. Few services have elected not to participate in programmes when invited and 95.2% of participating services were 'Very satisfied' or "Satisfied' with their programme in relation to their learning in their PD focus area(s). Providers have been proactive in developing and strengthening relationships with local MoE offices in order to identity and engage services within the targeted communities. A change in providers for this contract round from previous PD contracts has meant new providers have had to develop relationships with services and some existing providers have had to develop relationships in regions beyond where they have previously delivered PD. The use of a comprehensive set of strategies and approaches by providers to bring services on board and the individualising of programmes to meet services' needs is clearly one of the successes of the targeted approach, as providers have had to persevere with services in their identified communities. In contrast with findings from previous evaluations (Cherrington & Wansbrough, 2007), the targeted approach has clearly been helpful in engaging services who were slow to respond to invitations and who traditionally missed out on PD opportunities.

Services with particular characters or philosophies value highly undertaking PD with providers who have in-depth and first-hand knowledge of the service types they are working with. In addition to the views of Immersion Māori and Pasifika services discussed above, playcentre and home-based services clearly prefer working with providers and facilitators who have this expertise and can tailor programmes to fit their philosophy.

The challenges identified by providers in engaging services in PD were not specific to a targeted approach; many of these are barriers reflected in previous evaluations of PD (e.g., Cherrington & Wansbrough, 2007; Gaffney, 2003). Externally, re-licensing or upcoming ERO reviews were cited by services as a reason not to engage in a PD programme. Internal factors included having staff engaged in initial teacher education programmes or other study, staff changes, services in 'survival' mode, and the service leadership being unsupportive of the PD (including umbrella organisations refusing permission for their services to be involved).

Discussion throughout this chapter has noted how the management and leadership of ECE services can have a significant influence on the success or otherwise of a PD programme, either through the support that is put in place for teachers or the barriers that are erected. In an environment where access to PD programmes is targeted and therefore some services are receiving a greater investment from government than others – who are still expected to "take all reasonable steps to provide staff employed or engaged in the services with adequate professional support, professional development opportunities, and resources" (Ministry of Education, 2009) – it is reasonable to expect that the management of services receiving MoE-funded PD actively support their staff to effectively engage in their programme. Such support should address structural elements such as ensuring that staff have access to sufficient non-contact time to be able to collect and analyse data and that MoE-funded PD undertaken afterhours is adequately and appropriately acknowledged and recompensed.

Developing and sustaining communities of practice

Mixed success in developing communities of practice beyond the individual service is evident. A number of influential factors impact on the success of cluster groups including trust and relational issues between cluster members, geographical and travel aspects, and finding appropriate common times to meet. The homogeneity of cluster groups was also an influencing factor – whilst some providers noted strengths in bringing together diverse services types, case study and survey data from services noted that a preference for working with services from a common philosophy, particularly when they perceive that this allows them to make faster progress in their professional learning.

Where clusters work well, the learning for participants has been considerable. Identifying and mentoring key teachers who take on leadership roles within the cluster or their service has been an important feature; providers have been proactive in offering leadership clusters and mentoring programmes that support these teachers lead the development of communities of practice in their services. Successful clusters involving ECE services and primary schools are a notable example of providers developing effective communities of practice beyond individual services.

The evaluation sought information on whether and how communities of practice were sustainable beyond the life of the PD programme. The timing of the evaluation, midway through the contract period, meant that limited data was able to be collected on this aspect. Although providers had moved into phase two of their programmes, a significant number of services from phase one were continuing their programmes into phase two; those services who had completed their programme at the end of phase one had only recently finished and thus had little experience of being involved in self-sustaining communities. The available data does suggest, however, that services find it hard to, or are anxious about sustaining either their communities of practice or their new practices without input from their facilitator to keep them on track.

Providers are using a number of strategies to support services to maintain their gains and momentum following their intensive programmes, including establishing network groups (several of which were becoming increasingly independent of facilitator input), regular programmes of seminars and workshops available to services beyond the in-depth or cluster programmes, and open access to online resources and webinars through their websites. The success of these initiatives will need to be monitored over the remainder of the contract period.

Shifting from communities of practice to professional learning communities

We note that multiple and somewhat confused definitions of communities of practice are evident across both providers and services. Given these multiple definitions, it may be helpful to develop clarity within the ECE sector about communities of practice, along with other commonly used descriptors such as learning communities and professional learning communities. Whilst Lave and Wenger's (1991) initial use of the term, *communities of practice*, focused on the situated nature of learning, particularly in workplaces, it also emphasized the concept of *legitimate peripheral participation* whereby *newcomers* were inducted into the community and were allowed a reduced role whilst they learnt how things were done in that particular community. In expanding this definition of a community of practice when he argued that learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon that occurs when people actively participate in the practices of social communities, Wenger (1998) also identified specific indicators that suggest a community of practice had formed.

In contrast, the literature on *professional learning communities* specifically positions these entities in a more defined way. Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace and Thomas (2006) suggest that professional learning communities are:

> Groups of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-orientated, growth promoting way (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Toole & Louis, 2002); operating as a collective enterprise (King & Newman, 2001). (p. 225)

Such a definition suggests that professional learning communities are likely to be established and maintained in a more deliberate manner and for a more specific purpose that would necessarily be the case with Wenger's communities of practice. The two concepts do, however, share some fundamental similarities such as the development of shared understandings and beliefs, active participation of members, the mutual influence of members on the community and vice versa, and a collaborative approach to negotiating meaning, and thus learning, within the community (Hipp, Huffman, Pankake & Olivier, 2008; Stoll et al., 2006; Wenger, 1998).

A third term found in the literature is *learning communities*. Multiple definitions abound and parallels are drawn in the literature with Wenger's communities of practice; Kilpatrick, Barrett and Jones (2003, p. 11) offer the following definition:

> Learning communities are made up of people who share a common purpose. They collaborate to draw on individual strengths, respect a variety of perspectives, and actively promote learning opportunities. The outcomes are the creation of a vibrant, synergistic environment, enhanced potential for all members, and the possibility that new knowledge will be created.

These definitions suggest that when services include children, parents/whānau and wider community organisations and agencies that they are, in fact, referring to a learning community, whereas the communities established for the purposes of professional development (whether cluster groups or whole-service teams) are professional learning communities. Adopting such definitions is more than just a matter of semantics as the expectations of and demands on a professional learning community are considerably greater than for a learning community. Establishing expectations that teachers will engage in critical interrogation and reflection of their practice in an on-going and collaborative manner is an important feature of effective professional development (Mitchell & Cubey, 2003, and using the research evidence on effective professional learning communities will support providers in setting these expectations from the outset of their programmes.

Use of the rubrics

The introduction of the rubrics reflects the growing emphasis on finding effective ways of evaluating PD programmes and teacher development (Demimonde, 2009; Early, 2010), and the recognition that evaluation needs to be considered from the beginning of a PD programme (Early, 2010; Kuijpers, Houtveen & Wubbels, 2010). As a new and iterative statement, effective use of the rubrics is clearly a work in progress. Variability in how the rubrics are being introduced and used by providers with services is evident, reflective perhaps of providers' journeys in understanding and integrating the rubrics into their PD programmes. The evidence of effective strategies reported in Chapter 8 for introducing and integrating the rubrics into PD gathered as part of this evaluation may assist in more consistent use by providers.

Clearly, the rubrics are most effective when thoroughly integrated into the PD programme. In-depth discussions between the facilitator and service personnel that draw on evidence of practice, akin to what Earl and Timperley (2008) describe as *learning conversations,* provide more opportunities for reflection and professional growth than when either the service or the facilitator complete the rubrics ratings on their own. Allowing sufficient time for these conversations to take place, particularly when working with services where new relationships are being developed concurrently, is an important consideration and one that may need to be more explicitly factored into programme hours in future. Inclusion of time to review the rubrics formatively during PD programmes should also be considered.

For many services the rubrics have contributed to teachers making significant attitudinal changes as the bar is raised on what effective practice looks like and they are provoked into reflection on areas where their practices may be less effective. Inclusion of the core rubrics ensures that culture, language and identity, working with parents/whānau, and leadership are kept to the fore as important elements within their programmes and practices. The rubrics have also contributed to understandings about self-review processes and of evidence-based practice. Further development of the rubrics statements, particularly "filling in the gaps" and addressing some of the issues raised by both providers and services (see Chapter 8), would support more consistent application of the rubrics in future.

Finally, although outside the scope of this evaluation, the development of the rubrics statement within a targeted PD environment raises the issue of how services outside the targeted communities are able to access and be supported to use the rubrics as a tool in their own self-review practices. Knowledge of the rubrics is likely to spread beyond services in the targeted

communities and the MoE may wish to consider the development of a resource around the rubrics that provides appropriate guidance for services wanting to use the rubrics independently. Given the evidence to date, that services engaging with the rubrics frequently overrate themselves in their initial assessment, such guidance is important so that services don't misuse the rubrics as confirming existing practices.

Final comments

Complexity issues

The delivery of effective professional development programmes for diverse ECE services across multiple focus areas (literacy and numeracy, social competence, transitions, education and care for children under two, and leadership) together with underpinning themes (identity, language and culture; engaging parents in their children's learning; developing sustainable communities of practice) is highly complex. Determining the effectiveness of these PD programmes has also been complex, given that the methodology used for this evaluation did not enable the 'effect size' of programmes to be readily measured in comparison to other influences on teachers' and services' improvements in practice. Rather, the generally qualitative evaluation methodology has enabled current ECE service practices to be identified and some of the influences on those practices to be teased out.

Multiple influences on services' success within their PD programmes are identifiable. These can be broadly grouped as provider, service or policy influences and may, in many cases, have a positive or a negative impact on progress. For example, issues concerning leadership within services indicate that effective, proactive leadership supports success with PD whilst a lack of leadership or ineffectual leadership can slow down or derail progress. Previous evaluations (e.g., Cherrington & Wansbrough, 2007; Gaffney, 2003) have highlighted many of these issues which still exist as barriers today: leadership, changes in staffing, structural issues such as time and support for PD, travel (for both providers and isolated services), unqualified staff, and gaps in professional knowledge. Similarly, enablers such as an emphasis on relationship building (between provider and service; provider, service and community; and between service and parents/whānau) and facilitator characteristics (such as a willingness to listen to services' needs, cultural competence, knowledge of the service, and knowledge) have also been documented in previous evaluations and were evident in this evaluation. Two additional enablers are more evident in this evaluation: 1) providers' commitment to the services and their flexibility in tailoring programmes to meet services' needs, and 2) providers' increased attention to supporting services to gather evidence through the rubrics and self-review processes and to engage in critique of practice using that evidence is an aspect that has been strengthened in the current contract round.

Policy issues have also influenced the success of these PD programmes: the requirement that providers work closely with local MoE officials to determine priorities within the targeted communities has helped strengthen relationships between MoE and providers, resulting in a more unified engagement with services. The rubrics, whilst not universally popular or understood, are beginning to make a positive impact as providers and services engage with them as reflective and evaluative tools. As noted by one provider, they create opportunities for some of the hard questions to be asked and force services to really look for evidence to support their ratings.

The delivery of multiple professional development opportunities by the MoE (such as the *Incredible Years* and rapid response programmes) together with programme offered by other government departments such as the Ministry of Health – often to the same targeted communities – seems, at times, to be overloading services and impacting on their rate of progress. There also appears potential to strengthen communication and liaison between different Ministries and between local and head offices, to support services to prioritise which programmes they engage with. Finally, funding changes appear to have had a negative impact on some services' ability to engage in and progress their programmes – reductions in the

availability of non-contact time, increased numbers of unqualified staff, and absent staff not being replaced when the service is still able to maintain regulatory requirements were all identified as barriers to making progress with PD programmes.

Differences between targeted programme and national programmes

Finally, the prime focus of this evaluation has been on the largest component of the MoE-funded ECE PD programmes – whole-centre/service and cluster PD – although both the national leadership and education for children under-two programmes were integrated into the evaluation process. Data collected from providers has focused more heavily on programme one, given that seven of the nine providers participating in the evaluation only delivered programme one. Similarly, 14 of the 16 case study services were involved in programme one. However, more than half of the survey respondents had been enrolled in either programme two and/or three or in programme one plus programme two and/or three, enabling analysis of the results by these groupings of respondents. As the data reported in Chapters 4 through 8 indicate, overwhelmingly the differences in the responses by programme groupings are small with few clear trends emerging. The one key area where significant differences were noted was in the strategies used by providers of different programmes to sustain communities of practice after the completion of PD programmes: respondents who had participated in a national programme were significantly more likely to report their provider(s) used online strategies whilst those in programme one reported much greater use of face-to-face strategies.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Provider interview schedule

Questions:

Section one: Engaging services in PD

1. What approaches and strategies have you used to involve and engage services in your PD programmes?

    Follow up: How have these evolved over the period of the contract to date?

2. What particular challenges and successes have you experienced that have influenced service engagement in your PD programmes?

3. Have you identified services within your target regions who have not engaged in a PD programme when invited?
    - Follow-up prompt: Explore provider perspectives on why some services have not become involved.

4. What influence have the professional leaders within services had on their services becoming and staying engaged in PD?

Section two: PD programme effectiveness, successes and challenges

5. I'd like to focus now on the contract requirement that PD programmes have a central focus on valuing children's identity, language and culture, specifically:

    a. What approaches have you and your facilitators used in your programmes to increase services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?
        - Follow-up prompt: Can you give examples of how effective these approaches have been?

    b. What particular successes and/or challenges have you faced in improving teacher practices around valuing identity, language and culture?
        - Probe as to whether these are provider-based or service-based.

    c. In what ways have services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture increased as a result of your PD programmes? In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract been able to increase services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?

6. Moving now to look at the focus areas that your PD programmes have addressed:
    a. Which focus areas have your PD programmes specifically focused on?
    b. In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract improved teacher practice in the focus areas?

        - Follow-up prompt: Can you give me examples of how practices have improved as a result of the PD programmes in the focus areas?

    c. What particular successes and/or challenges have you faced in improving teacher practices in the PD focus areas?
        - Probe as to whether these are provider-based or service-based.

7. Looking now at improving teacher practices in order to improve children's learning outcomes:
   a. In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract improved teacher practices in order to improve children's learning outcomes?
      - Follow-up prompt: Can you give me examples of how children's learning outcomes have been improved as a result of the PD programmes? What evidence?
   b. What challenges and successes have you faced in getting teachers to focus on the impact that their practice has on children's learning?
      - Probe as to whether these are provider-based or service-based.

8. Another key aspect of the contracts is to support teachers to engage in on-going reflection and improvement of their practices:
   a. In what ways have the PD programmes delivered as part of your contract supported teachers' on-going reflection and improvement of their practices?
      - Follow-up prompt: Can you give me examples of how teachers' reflection and improvement of their practices has been strengthened through the PD programmes?
   b. What successes and/or challenges have you faced in supporting teachers' reflection and improvement of their practices?
      - Probe as to whether these are provider-based or service-based.
   c. What strategies are you using to ensure services sustain their reflective practices beyond the completion of their programme?

Section three: Establishing and maintaining relationships:

9. Within the regions you are working in, which organisations have you established and maintained relationships in order to better meet the PD needs of local ECE services?
   - Follow-up prompt: How have you made decisions on which organisations to work with?

Section four: Communities of practice:

10. How are you defining a community of practice (COP) within your PD programmes?

11. What role have you played in developing COPS in the target communities?

12. What successes and challenges have you faced in establishing and maintaining COPS?
    - Probe as to whether these are provider-based or service-based.

13. As services complete and exit their PD programme, what approaches and strategies are you using to ensure sustainability of their COPS?

14. What challenges and successes have you faced with these exit strategies to date?
    - Probe as to whether these are provider-based or service-based.

Section five: Use of the rubrics
(NB: National programmes only use rubrics for cluster groups)

15. In what ways, have you used the rubrics to encourage services to reflect on and critique their practices?
    - Follow-up prompt: How useful have you found the approaches you've used? Have you adapted the rubrics in any way? If so, how and why?

16. How did you introduce the rubrics to services?
    Follow-up prompt: How well integrated into the programmes are the rubrics?

17. What barriers to the effective use of the rubrics have you experienced?

18. How effective have you found the rubrics as a tool to help assess the impact of PD on practices?
    - Follow up prompt: Can you give me some examples of how you have used the rubrics to assess the impact of PD on practices?

Section six: National programmes only
19. Which elements of your online platforms have you found most effective in engaging ECE services in the leadership/ education and care for children aged under two programmes?

    a. What elements of your national programmes do you think have made the most difference to children's learning? Why?

    b. Evidence of effectiveness.

Wrap up interview:
20. Any other comments?

Appendix B: Online survey

Block 9

Thank you for taking the time to complete the following survey. As outlined in the email inviting you to participate in this survey, we have been asked to complete an evaluation of the current Ministry of Education-funded ECE Professional development contracts.

A wide range of early childhood services have participated in the MOE-funded ECE professional development programmes, and we appreciate that the terminology used in this survey may not exactly reflect what you use in your ECE service. Please note that when we refer to "teaching teams" we mean all the adults who contribute to the learning programme offered in your ECE service, not whether those adults consider themselves to be "teachers". Similarly, we have used the term "teaching" to mean the setting up of the programme and interactions with children by the adults responsible for the learning programme.

By continuing with this survey, you are deemed to have given your consent to participate in this project. You have the right of withdrawal from this survey up until the time that you submit the survey.

To begin the survey, please click on the right arrow button at the bottom of the page. This will take you to the first section of the questionnaire. Use this button to proceed to each new section of the questionnaire. If you wish to return to a previous section please use the left arrow button. Please do not use the forward and back buttons on your web browser as these will take you out of the survey.

Although we do ask you to provide your Ministry of Education unique number (and to provide an email address if you would like to receive a summary of the survey results once the final report has been submitted to the Ministry of Education), your service will not be identified in any way in the report or any subsequent publications as the results will be reported as aggregated data.

We do appreciate your participation in this survey – your contribution will help strengthen the evaluation and inform future Ministry of Education policies around professional development for ECE services.

Kind regards
Sue Cherrington (PhD)

Project Director
On behalf of the evaluation team

Section 1: Demographic Details

Section 1: Demographic details

Please select the service type below that best describes your ECE service:

- ⊘ Education & Care Centre - community-based, full-day
- ⊘ Education & Care Centre - community-based, sessional
- ⊘ Education and Care Centre - privately owned, full-day
- ⊘ Education and Care Centre - privately owned, sessional
- ⊘ Home-based service
- ⊘ Kindergarten - full-day
- ⊘ Kindergarten - sessional
- ⊘ Maaori Immersion Centre/ Bilingual Centre
- ⊘ Montessori Centre
- ⊘ Pacific Language Nest
- ⊘

Playcentre

○ Steiner Centre

○ Te Kohanga Reo

○ Other (please specify _____)

Is your service currently funded at:

○ 80%+ qualified and registered teachers

○ 50 - 79% qualified and registered teachers

○ 25 - 49% qualified and registered teachers

○ 0 - 24% qualified and registered teachers

Is your service currently funded at the:

○ Quality funding level

○ Standard funding level

Please select the geographic location of your service from the list below:

○ Northland

○ Auckland

○ Waikato

○ Taranaki

○ Bay of Plenty

○ Gisborne

○ Hawkes Bay

○ Manawatu/Whanganui

○ Wellington

○ Tasman/Nelson/Marlborough

○ Canterbury

○ West Coast

○ Otago

○ Southland

Service roll numbers

	Less than 20	20 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 99	100 or more
How many children is your service licensed for?	○	○	○	○	○	○
How many children are currently enrolled in your service?	○	○	○	○	○	○

Number of adults in your teaching team

	1 - 3 adults	4 - 6 adults	7 - 10 adults	11 - 19 adults	20 or more adults
How many adults are there in your teaching team	○	○	○	○	○

Please indicate how many members of your teaching team identify with the following ethnic backgrounds (team members can select more than one ethnic background that they identify with)

	Number of staff identifying with each ethnicity
NZ Maaori	_____
Pacific peoples (please specify)	_____
NZ European/Pakeha	_____
Asian	_____
Middle Eastern/African	_____
Teachers/Educators from Other Ethnicities (please specify)	_____

Is your service:

○ City - central

○ City - surburban

○ Town

○ Rural

Section 2: Your service's PD programme

Section 2: Your service's PD programme

Please indicate which of the following MOE-funded PD programmes your service has been involved with in the last 18 months (select all relevant):

☐ Programme 1: In-depth professional development to services or clusters of services in targetted areas

☐ Programme 2: Professional Leadership - national programme - ELP or CORE

☐ Programme 3: Education and care of children under two - national programme - ELP or CORE

If your service has been involved in more than one of Programme 1, 2 or 3, please answer the rest of the questions in this survey in relation to the programme that you undertook most professional development in.

Please indicate the focus area of your PD programme:
(Note: If you have focused on more than one area, please select all relevant)

☐ Literacy

☐ Numeracy

☐ Transitions (into and within services; from ECE to school)

☐ Developing children's social competence

☐ Education and care of children aged under two years

☐ Leadership

☐ Other (please specify)
_____

Please select the option below that best describes how far through your PD programme you are:

○ We have just started our programme

○ We are in the middle of our programme

○ We are almost at the end of our programme

○ We recently finished our programme

○ We finished our programme a while ago

○ We finished our first programme and have started a second round of PD

Section 3: Overall effectiveness of your PD programme

Section 3: Overall effectiveness of your PD programme

To what extent has your professional development programme been effective in making a difference:

	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not very effective	Ineffective	Unsure
To your teaching in the focus area(s)	○	○	○	○	○
To how you think about your teaching during your interactions with children	○	○	○	○	○
To your ability to critically reflect on your practices	○	○	○	○	○
To a team focus on teaching and learning	○	○	○	○	○
For the children in your service	○	○	○	○	○
To engaging all parents/whanau in their children's learning	○	○	○	○	○

Please rate how effective you felt your service was in each of the following areas BEFORE you began your PD programme and NOW as a result of engaging in your PD programme.

	Effectiveness of our service BEFORE we began our PD					Effectiveness of our service NOW as a result of our PD programme				
	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Very Effective	Ineffective	Unsure	Very Effective	Somewhat Effective	Not Very Effective	Ineffective	Unsure
Your focus	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

area(s)										
Your thinking about your teaching during your interactions with children	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ability to critically reflect on your practices	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Team discussions which focus on teaching and learning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Valuing children's identity, language and culture	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Engaging all parents/ whanau in their children's learning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Please give an example of how your practices in your FOCUS AREA(S) have changed as a result of your engagement in your PD programme.

Please give an example of how your practices have changed as a result of your engagement in your PD programme in terms of how YOU ENGAGE ALL PARENTS/WHANAU in their children's learning.

Section4: PD programme rubrics

Section 4: PD programme rubrics

The Ministry of Education has developed a set of rubrics to help show improvements in practice as a result of services engaging in PD programmes.

To what extent have you used the rubrics relevant to your PD programme?

○ Not at all

○ A little

○ A great deal

○ All the time

○ We are not aware of the rubrics

Please indicate how helpful you found each rubric used in your PD programme to help you focus on improving your practices.

	Very helpful	Quite helpful	A little helpful	Not at all helpful	Not applicable
Rubric A: Parent and whanau engagement in children's learning	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric B: Effective teaching practices for Maori children	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric B1: Culturally responsive and effective teaching practices for Pasifika children	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric C: Effective educational leadership: Culturally responsive learning contexts and systems	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric D: Effective focus on literacy	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric E: Effective focus on mathematics	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric F: Effective focus on education and care of infants and toddlers	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric G: Effective focus on transition to school	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric H: Effective focus on transitions (into and within the service)	○	○	○	○	○
Rubric I: Effective focus on social competence	○	○	○	○	○

What have you found most helpful about using rubrics in your PD programme?

What have you found unhelpful when using the rubrics in your PD programme?

Section 5: Engaging in on-going reflection and improvement

Section 5: Engaging in on-going reflection and improvement

Professional development providers use a range of processes and strategies in their programmes to support teachers and educators to engage in ongoing reflection about and improvement of their practices.

In Column One, please indicate whether your PD PROVIDER OFFERED the following processes and strategies as part of your PD programme.

In Column Two, please indicate HOW EFFECTIVE each of the processes and strategies you used have been in helping your team to engage in ongoing reflection and improvement of your practices.

	Our PD provider offered these processes and strategies to help us engage in ongoing reflection and improvement of our practices		We found these processes and strategies helped us to engage in ongoing reflection and improvement of our practices					
	Yes	No	A great deal	To some extent	Just a little bit	Not at all	We didn't use this process or strategy	Unsure
Rubrics	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Self-review processes	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Hui/ discussions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wananga	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reflective journals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
PD portfolios	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Online interactions	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Peer mentoring	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

There are a number of factors that can be a barrier to an ECE team using the strategies and processes listed in the question above to engage in ongoing reflection about and improvement of their practices. Please rank these factors from the greatest impact (1) to the least impact (7) on your team's ability to engage in ongoing reflection and improvement of your practices.

We don't have the time to use these processes

Staff turnover in our service has made it hard to use these processes

Our team doesn't feel very confident in using these processes

Difficulties in using ICT (e.g., lack of internet access; not confident in using technology)

Our service management has not supported our use of these processes

Impact of external factors (e.g., the Christchurch earthquakes)

Other (please specify)

Please indicate the extent to which the following aspects helped your team's use of processes or strategies to support your ongoing reflection and improvement of practice.

	Very helpful	Quite helpful	Not helpful	Not applicable
A team approach	○	○	○	○
Leadership within the service to keep up our momentum	○	○	○	○
A shared vision of what we want to achieve from our PD programme	○	○	○	○
A facilitator who understood the context and needs of our service	○	○	○	○
A facilitator who kept us on track	○	○	○	○
A facilitator who understood these processes/strategies	○	○	○	○
A facilitator who could help us collect and interpret data about our practices and children's learning	○	○	○	○

Section 6: Children's identity, language and culture

Section 6: Children's identity, language and culture

The professional development programmes funded by the Ministry of Education have a core focus on services being responsive to children's identity, language and culture.

	A great deal	Quite a lot	A little	Not at all	Not sure
To what extent has your PD programme focused on children's identity, language and culture?	○	○	○	○	○
To what extent has your PD programme helped your service to be more responsive to children's identity, language and culture?	○	○	○	○	○

Please give an example of how your service is now more responsive to children's identity, language and culture.

Please tell us why you think there has been no change in your services's responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture as a result of your participation in your PD programme

Section 7: Developing professional relationships

Section 7: Developing professional relationships

As a result of your PD programme, who do you talk with NOW about your ECE practices and children's learning that you didn't talk to prior to your PD programme (select all relevant)?

- [ ] Other ECE services
- [ ] Primary schools teachers/principals
- [ ] Kaumatua, kuia
- [ ] Local iwi or hapu
- [ ] Maaori organisations (please list)
  _____
- [ ] Local cultural community groups
- [ ] Local churches
- [ ] Social service organisations (please list)
  _____
- [ ] Health organisations (please list)
  _____
- [ ] Special education services (please list)
  _____
- [ ] Outside experts (e.g., visiting academics
- [ ] Online discussion groups (please list)
  _____
- [ ] Other people or organisations (please list)
  _____

Which of the following external people and organisations does your service intend to continue engaging with AFTER your PD programme is completed?

- [ ] Colleagues in other ECE services
- [ ] Primary school teachers/principals
- [ ] Kaumatua, kuia
- [ ] Local iwi or hapu
- [ ] Maaori organisations
- [ ] Local cultural community groups
- [ ] Local churches
- [ ] Health organisations
- [ ] Social service organisations
- [ ] Special education services
- [ ] Online discussion groups
- [ ] Others (please list)
  _____

How effective was your PD provider in:

	Very effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective
Building a relationship with YOUR service in order to address your PD needs?	○	○	○	○
Helping YOU to build relationships with stakeholders and other ECE services in your community?	○	○	○	○

Please indicate whether the following factors supported or were a barrier to your PD provider's effectiveness in building a relationship with your service

	Supported provider's effectiveness in building a relationship with us	Was a barrier to provider's effectiveness in building a relationship with us	Did not influence our provider's effectiveness in building a relationship with our service
Prior knowledge of our service	○	○	○
Facilitator ability to listen carefully to our views about our PD needs	○	○	○
Availability of time for the facilitator to get to know us	○	○	○
Facilitator's degree of cultural competence	○	○	○
Geographical area covered by our facilitator	○	○	○
Access to our facilitator when we needed him/her	○	○	○
Stability of staff within our team	○	○	○
Stability of staff within the facilitator's team	○	○	○
Other factors (please specify)	○	○	○

Section 8: Communities of Practice

Section 8: Communities of Practice

Professional development programmes are expected to help develop and sustain Communities of Practice. Please indicate who, from the list below, you would include in your Community of Practice (select all relevant):

☐ The teachers/educators in your team

☐ Parents and whanau of the children attending your service

☐ The children attending your service

☐ Colleagues from other ECE services

☐ Principals/teachers from the primary schools our children go on to

☐ Representatives from outside organisations such as health and social services

☐ Local iwi/hapu/cultural community groups

☐ Other (please list)

How effective was your PD provider in building a Community of Practice?

○ Very Effective

○ Effective

○ Ineffective

○ Very Ineffective

○ Don't know

In what ways has your PD provider worked with you to ensure that your Community of Practice is sustainable once your PD programme is completed (select all relevant)?

☐ Established ongoing networks/clusters of services

☐ Uses online platform to encourage interaction between services

☐ Provides ongoing resources online

☐ Other - please list _____

Section 9: Overall satisfaction with your PD programme

Section 9: Overall satisfaction with your PD programme

We are interested in your experiences of different delivery modes within your PD programme.

In column ONE, please indicate which delivery modes you experienced as part of your PD programme.

In column TWO, please indicate how effective you found these modes of delivery.

	We experienced these modes of delivery as part of our PD programme		We found these modes of delivery to be:				
	Yes	No	Very effective	Effective	Ineffective	Very ineffective	Not applicable to our PD programme
Whole-centre delivery	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Cluster groups	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Online activities, such as forums, "webinars"	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Workshops/seminars	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Visits to other ECE services	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Peer mentoring from							

197

oher ECE practitioners							
Other - please specify							

How flexible was your PD provider in adapting the delivery of your PD programme to meet the individual needs of your service? Please tell us about this.

○ Very flexible

○ Flexible

○ Inflexible

○ Very inflexible

○ Not sure

Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with your service's PD programme in relation to:

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Your learning in your focus area(s)	○	○	○	○
Making a difference to children's learning	○	○	○	○

Please tell us why you are satisfied with your PD programme

Please tell us why you are dissatisfied with your PD programme

Any other comments that you would like to make?

As part of this evaluation we will be undertaking 14 case studies of services that have participated in MOE-funded professional development. Please write your Ministry of Education unique number below if your service is willing to be considered for the case study component of this evaluation. The unique numbers will only be

used to help us identify services to approach to participate in the case study component and to give the fieldworkers some background information about the service before they visit for data collection.

If you would like to receive a copy of the survey results, please write your email address below. Results will be sent out after submission of the final report to the Ministry of Education in February 2013.

Appendix C: Case study protocol

EVALUATION OF MOE-FUNDED ECE PD PROGRAMMES 2010 – 2013
CASE STUDY PROTOCOL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

VUW is undertaking an evaluation of the current MOE-funded ECE PD programmes (2010 – 2013 contract period). Ten PD providers offer programmes: all offer PD targeted at ECE services located in communities with low socio-economic status and/or significant Māori and/or Pasifika communities (Programme 1). Two providers also offer national programmes focused on *Leadership* (Programme 2) and *Education and Care of Children under Two Years* (Programme 3).

Programme 1 offers the following focus areas for the PD:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Transitions (into and within services; from ECE to school)
- Developing children's social competence
- Education and care of children aged under two years
- Leadership

In addition, all PD programmes have a core focus on valuing children's identity, language and culture.

Purpose of the project

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine the effectiveness and impact of the ECE PD programme. The evaluation focuses on whether the programme has been effective in:

- Improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children
- Supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact of their practice on learning outcomes for children
- Supporting ECE services to establish and sustain their own processes for ongoing reflection and improvement.

The evaluation is also intended to improve the Ministry of Education's understanding of how effective the targeted locations' focus of the programme has been in addressing the PD needs of ECE services in the targeted communities.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of the actual providers delivering the programmes.

The Ministry of Education has identified sixteen evaluation questions which we have grouped together under five over-arching questions. These are listed below in Table 1:

Table 1: Evaluation questions

Overarching evaluation questions	Ministry of Education evaluation questions
In what ways has PD changed teacher practices and processes to improve learning outcomes for children?	1. How effective has the PD been in improving teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children? 2. How effective has the PD been in enhancing teacher practice in relation to the key focus areas? 3. How successful has the PD been in supporting teachers to focus more strongly on the impact their practice has on learning outcomes for children? 4. How effective has the PD been in supporting services to develop and sustain their own processes for ongoing reflection and improvement? 5. How have services strengthened their own processes for ongoing reflection and improvement as a result of the PD?
In what ways has PD changed services' responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture?	6. How effective has the PD been in increasing service responsiveness to children's identity, language and culture? 7. How have the PD Providers worked with services to increase services' responsiveness to identity, language and culture?
In what ways has the targeted approach resulted in services being involved and engaged in PD?	8. How effective have the PD Providers been in building and maintaining working relationships with ECE services and other relevant stakeholders to address the PD needs in the targeted community? 9. What approaches have PD providers used to successfully involve and engage services in the PD programme?
In what ways have COPs/PLCs been developed and sustained as a result of engagement in PD?	10. How successful have PD Providers been in developing communities of practice in the targeted locations they are working in? 11. How are communities of practice being defined? / What are the natures of these communities of practice? 12. How are providers working with communities of practice to ensure these are sustainable once the PD is completed?
In what ways have the rubrics been used by PD providers and services?	13. How have the rubrics contributed to changes in teacher practice to improve learning outcomes for children? 14. How have the PD Providers been using the rubrics? 15. In what ways have services been using the rubrics? 16. How have the rubrics assisted providers and services to assess the impact of the professional development on services' practices?

Data collection

There are four data collection components to the evaluation:

- Document analysis of provider milestones and online platforms
- An online survey of all ECE services participating in the PD programmes
- Interviews with the contract directors (and possibly members of their PD facilitation teams)
- Case studies of 14 ECE services

The case study component is the final part of the evaluation data collection process. Collectively, these case studies will cover the range of programmes, providers, service types, geographic regions, and focus areas offered within the programmes – however, the results

from individual cases are not intended to be generalised across service types or providers' programmes. Twelve services will be selected from amongst Programme One participating services, with a further service from each of the leadership and education and care for under-two's programmes. The selection of case study services will also take into account the respondents to the survey component. For example, if particular service types are under-represented within the survey respondents we will increase the number of services of that type included within the case study sample. We will also select some services that chose not to respond to the survey as they may reveal different experiences and views to those services that did respond to the survey.

The case study visits to 14 individual ECE services provides the opportunity to gather independent qualitative data of shifts in teachers' practices that are leading to improved learning outcomes for children. This is important to triangulate self-reports from providers and participating service gained through the survey and interview components, and also to provide illustrative examples of the effectiveness (or otherwise) of the PD programmes.

During the fieldwork visit we will be asking you to undertake a series of data collection activities, as follows:

- Observational vignettes providing evidence of teacher practices and interactions, and of how these enhance children's learning
- Semi-structured interviews with teachers
- Informal semi-structured interviews with parents/whānau
- An analysis of the physical environment of the service for evidence of shifts in practice
- A document analysis of relevant service documentation

We will also be asking you to complete:
- Brief phone interviews with 2–3 outside organisations that the relevant provider has identified they have worked with to address the PD needs of the local ECE services.
- A reflective questions sheet

Following the fieldwork visit you will prepare the data so that it can be entered into NVivo for data analysis.

FIELDWORK PROTOCOLS

General:
Each fieldwork visit will consist of a one-day visit to the ECE service. For out-of-town visits, travel to the locality will occur the night before the visit to ensure that you are able to spend a full day at the service (8am–5pm).

Prior to the visit, you will receive background information about the service to assist you in quickly establishing a positive working relationship with the teachers/educators and to help you understand the context that you are visiting. This information will include (but not be limited to):

- The PD focus area for the service
- Length of time involved in PD at time of fieldwork
- The latest ERO report available
- Number of children enrolled and their ethnicities

The service will have been sent information about the focus of your fieldwork, consent forms, an information sheet for parents, and a request for copies of information such as the service's philosophy statement and relevant policies. Permission for your fieldwork to occur will also have been gained from the umbrella organisation (such as a Kindergarten Association or corporate employer) where relevant.

In the 24–48 hour period prior to your visit, please phone the centre to introduce yourself to the head teacher/supervisor/manager and to confirm the expected time of your arrival on the fieldwork day.

Please use the following instructions to guide your data collection over the day. Having consistency between our fieldworkers is critical in ensuring useful, robust data.

Upon arrival:
It is essential that you establish a rapport with staff quickly whilst also making a start on data collection, given the data to be collected over the day. When you arrive:

- introduce yourself to staff
- ask to be shown around the service
- ask for a brief outline of the day/session so that you can identify when to focus on observing practice and when it would be better to undertake the environmental and document analyses
- check when it is appropriate to talk with staff and parents
- check whether there are any of the children's portfolios that you are unable to view
- check whether staff want to formally introduce you to the children
- you may like to begin your data collection with less obtrusive activities, such as analysis of the physical environment, whilst you "settle in".

Guidelines for Observations/Vignettes

Over the course of the day, you are asked to record a range of vignettes*.*

A vignette has been described *as a brief but provocative word-picture or description of a moment or incident which is captured as the observer experienced it.*

Ensure your vignettes are as **descriptive as possible** in order for us to get a full picture of what is happening and its potential value. Where possible use children's and/or teachers' words rather than paraphrasing them in your own language or converting them into your own discourse. You will see on each vignette template there is a space for stating which aspect the vignette links to (such as the PD focus area; valuing children's identity language and culture). **It is important that you fill this in** so we are clear about how the vignette represents an aspect of practice or children's learning relevant to this evaluation. Opportunities may also arise to have discussion with staff about their perception and/or meaning of various vignettes. If this occurs, please record teachers' perceptions alongside your positioning, rather than within the actual vignette.

Collect as many vignettes as possible so that we are able to gain as broad an understanding as possible of teacher practices and children's learning within the service. These initial examples below are applicable to all services, regardless of their PD focus area:

- Vignettes where **children's identity, language and culture** are acknowledged, celebrated and/or supported

- Vignettes of teachers fostering **critical thinking around children's identity, language and culture**. This could include challenging bias, tackling social justice or inclusion issues.

- Vignettes which demonstrates how **regular events and routines** are being structured to enable children to:
  - Construct a positive notion of self
  - Experience routines and rituals consistent with their cultural mores and individual rituals.
  - Experience competence (culturally, socially, physically)

- Vignettes where a child's **first language is supported** and promoted

- Vignettes that highlight how resources, activities, and play choices are used to counteract **cultural stereotyping**

- Vignettes which highlight how **parents and families from diverse backgrounds contribute to educators' understandings of the children** they work with.

- Vignettes which highlight how teachers are supporting **parents and families to be engaged in their children's learning**.

- Vignettes which highlight teachers focusing on children's learning

These next examples relate to different PD focus areas. You will need to concentrate your collection of vignettes on the PD focus areas applicable to the service:

- Vignettes where **the PD focus area** (such as literacy or numeracy) **is evident** in teacher interactions

- Vignettes where teachers are modelling **respect, kindness and consideration towards others.**

- Vignettes where children are supported in **developing social competence** in a particular area, e.g., communicating effectively with others, discussing their own and others' feelings

- Vignettes where a **child with challenging behaviour is being supported** to interact positively with others or manage impulses

- Vignettes which illustrate **how children are being supported in transitions** (in, within or from the service)

To ensure that the vignettes are as robust as possible, please take time at the end of the day to **reflect on the vignettes**. Ask the "so what?" questions, for example:

- So what does this vignette reveal about teachers' pedagogical practices that support children's learning?

- So what does this vignette reveal about teachers' focus on the impact that their own practice has on children's learning?

- So what does this vignette reveal about this service's processes for reflecting on teaching and learning, and/or on improving practice?

- So what evidence of teachers valuing children's identity, language and culture is there in this vignette?

- So what evidence of teachers' practice in their focus area is revealed in this vignette?

- So what does this vignette reveal about how teachers engage all parents/whānau in their children's learning?

Semi-structured interview: Teachers

Please carry out a semi-structured interview with the head teacher or supervisor and any other staff who are willing and available to participate. Allow the service to make the decision about which staff will participate. Audio record the interview and then record information on the interview schedule (you don't need to transcribe everything but where there are useful quotes please transcribe these accurately and indicate that they are actual quotes, rather than notes). Remember we are interested in rich data so you may need to provide additional prompts. Try to keep your prompts as open as possible so that you are not influencing the responses. Prompts such as "that sounds interesting, can you tell me more", "and "can you give me an example ….?" might be useful prompts. You may wish to audio-tape the interview (if staff are comfortable) – if you do this, please use the audio as a prompt for your notes rather than undertaking a complete transcription of the interview.

Interview questions

This should take no more than 45 minutes. The questions are as follows (**bolded** questions are the most important if you are pressed for time):

1. **Can you tell me what you see as the most important changes in your practices as a result of your PD programme?**
   a. Check for coverage of changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes/dispositions
   b. Check coverage of: focus area; children's identity, language and culture; engaging parents/whānau in their children's learning; reflection)
   c. What impact have these changes had on children's learning?

2. **What do you think have been the most influential factors on changes in your practice?** (may be positive or negative changes)

3. As a result of your PD programme, tell me about any shifts in:
   a. Your relationship with other organisations in your community?
   b. Enrolment patterns of families entering the service (e.g., increased participation of cultural groups)?
   c. Your professional conversations about your teaching and children's learning?

4. **In terms of your involvement in your PD programme, what has been successful or challenging and why?**
   a. Have there been particular structural enablers or constraints? How have you and your provider dealt with these?

5. Who do you see as involved in your community of practice?
   a. How are members of your COP involved?
   b. How do you deal with potential issues of power imbalances within the COP (for example, whose voices get heard? What happens when there are disagreements between different members within the COP?)
   c. What impact do you think your COP has on your teaching practices and on children's learning outcomes?

6. I know that you have answered some questions in the survey about the rubrics. Following on from those questions, can you tell me:
   a. Who was involved from the service?
   b. What suggestions you have for improving the rubrics?
   c. Any examples where the rubrics helped you to really confront and shift your practices, or where you could recognise changes in learning for children?

7. **Are there any other comments that you would like to make about the impact and effectiveness of your PD programme on your teaching and on children's learning?**

Semi-structured interviews: Parents

Please aim to undertake semi-structured interviews with at least 3 parents or other family members. These may be undertaken with individuals or as a small group of parents. If they choose to contribute in groups please only complete one interview sheet and identify the number of parents that participated.

Begin by introducing yourself, explain the purpose of the visit to the service and invite the parent/s to participate in the interview.

The aim of the interview is to gain parents' perspectives of shifts in teacher practices related to:
- the focus area
- to valuing children's identity, language and culture
- to engaging parents/whānau in their children's learning

Try to involve parents from different cultural groups where possible. These "interviews" should be conversational rather than formal whilst using the questions below as a guide.

1. How long has your association been with (the service)? How are you involved in a typical week?
    a. Prompts if necessary – how often come into the service; how long stay each day/session; involvement within the programme; involvement with service management or governance; discussions with teachers about their child, including learning.

2. Have you noticed any change in the teachers' practices around (PD focus area) over the (insert length of time service has been involved in PD programme)?

3. What might some of these changes be?
    a. Prompts – sharing of information about children's learning with parents; inviting parents' involvement; supporting children's learning in focus area)

4. How well do you think that (the service) recognises and values your child's identity, culture and language?
    a. Prompt – examples

5. How do the teachers involve you in your child's learning?
    a. Prompt: e.g., sharing examples with me through conversation or portfolios; asking what learning I've noticed outside the service; asking for help in supporting my child's learning at the service or outside

Parents are not asked to identify themselves. However, asking the first question establishes the longevity of the relationship that parents have with the centre and therefore changes that they may have seen occur over time.

Parents may enquire how this information will be used and you should reassure them that they (or their children or the service) will not be identifiable in the completed evaluation. The information gathered will be used to inform the Ministry of Education about the effectiveness of the MoE-funded ECE PD programmes.

Finish the interview by asking the parent/s if there is anything further they would like to add/say and thank the parent/s for participating.

Environmental analysis
You are asked to undertake an analysis of the environment. You may find it useful to start this task relatively early in the day as it will help you to become familiar with the environment.

In your analysis, look for:
*   Examples of the PD focus area in the physical environment. This may be easier to find for the focus areas of literacy, numeracy and transitions than for other focus areas.
    -   Go beyond books and written language when gathering examples of literacy – include, for example, evidence of oral literacy (perhaps through photographs), technologies, and art. Pay attention to both adults and children's use of technologies with visual and oral literacies (e.g., photos, videos, tape recorders, computers).
    -   Transition examples may be evident through both programme events (which you are likely to record as a vignette) and through artifacts such as books, noticeboards, stories in portfolios, photographs.

*   Examples of how children's identity, language and culture are reflected within the programme – wall displays (including posters, parent noticeboards), artifacts, books, puzzles, resources within play areas such as family corner.

- How the physical environment is arranged to encourage parents/whānau to be engaged in their children's learning – for example, where are children's portfolios located? Are they easily accessible for parents and children to look at in the service? What displays about children's learning are on the walls? What general information about children's learning is included on parent noticeboards or in parent information resources? What messages are parents given about being engaged in their child's learning through the enrolment information and portfolios? Are there spaces/events that encourage parents to stay in the service rather than just dropping off their child?

- Examples of teachers' engagement in reflection and ongoing improvement (these may be available in public spaces such as on a noticeboard or in a newsletter for parents or be more privately located – in which case you may get more data from the document analysis)

You may choose to take photographs of the environment to jog your own memory in your analysis but **please delete these from your computer** upon completion. **Please do not hand in any of the photographs that you have taken.**

Document analysis

An analysis of the relevant documents in the service can assist with making judgements about the degree of change in teacher practices. Such documents may include:

- The service's philosophy statement (the service will be asked to make a copy available to you on your arrival)

- Policy documents on aspects such as assessment; parents involvement in the service; positive guidance/social competence; focus areas such as literacy; transitions (again, the service will be asked to make copies available to you on your arrival)

- Self-review documents

- PD portfolios (note that services may have evidence of their PD work that is not described as a portfolio)

- Minutes of staff meetings and planning meetings

- Reports to management or parent committees

- Newsletters

- Pedagogical documentation:
  - Wall displays
  - Children's portfolios. Prior to your visit, the service will have been sent information sheets for distribution to all parents explaining about the case study and asking parents to indicate to the staff if they do not want us to look at their child's portfolio. You will need to check with the staff whether there are any portfolios that you cannot view, and then select at random 6 portfolios to review. Your analysis needs to focus particularly on shifts in teacher practice and support of children's learning from prior to the PD programme beginning and post-completion.

Again, you may choose to take photographs to jog your memory in your analysis but **please delete these from your computer** upon completion. **Please do not hand in any of the photographs that you have taken**.

Telephone interviews with organisations beyond the service.

The Ministry is interested in knowing how effectively PD providers are engaging with organisations beyond ECE services in order to strengthen relationships between ECE and other organisations that have an interest in young children and families, and who may be able to support their engagement in ECE. Such organisations may include: the local office of the

Ministry, primary schools, iwi organisations, local cultural community groups, special education organisations, health organisations, churches.

You will be provided with details of 2–3 organisations that the provider has indicated they have developed a relationship with as part of their work in that targeted community. Please undertake a short (10 minute) telephone interview with them, using the following questions. This will help us to triangulate data from the providers' interviews about their engagement with other organisations. The interviews do not need to be undertaken during the field-visit. The organisations will have been provided with an information sheet and consent form prior to your interview.

Introduce yourself to the organisation's representative and remind them of the purpose of the evaluation and the interview.

1. Please tell me about the interactions that you have had with (name of provider) over the last 18 months.
   Prompt: frequency of interactions, nature of interactions

2. How useful have you found these interactions in terms of:
   a. Strengthening your relationship with local ECE services?
   b. Encouraging parents to engage in ECE with their children?
   c. Improving ECE services responsiveness to children and families?

3. How could (PD provider) work more effectively with your organisation to address the PD needs of the ECE services in your community?

4. Is there anything else that you would like to comment on?

Reflective question sheet
At the end of the day please answer the questions posed on the reflective sheet.

The questions posed include:

- In what you have observed do teacher practices appear to improve learning outcomes for children?

- In what you have observed are teachers focusing on the impact of their practice on learning outcomes for children

- In what you have observed have ECE services established and sustained their own processes for ongoing reflection and improvement.

- In what you have observed are teachers valuing children's identity, language and culture?

- Any final comments / things that stood out for you at the end of the day.

Please ensure you add a comment under each question.