

Awareness and confidence to work with Te Whāriki

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Ko te Tamaiti te Pūtake o te Kaupapa
The Child – the Heart of the Matter

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Awareness and confidence to work with *Te Whāriki*

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Introduction

New Zealand's early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki*, was updated in April, 2017. The previous version had been in place just over 20 years. *Te Whāriki* ([2017](#)) reflects the changes in theory, practice and early learning contexts that have occurred over the last 20 years ([MOE, 2017](#)).

Early learning services are being supported to implement *Te Whāriki* through a [programme of professional learning and development](#) (PLD) starting with workshops across New Zealand, and online resources and webinars. A Ministry of Education (the Ministry) contracted PLD provider has appointed [curriculum champions](#) to work with pedagogical leaders in some early learning services, with a focus on improving curriculum implementation practice through professional inquiry and internal evaluation.

ERO is undertaking a series of evaluations focused on the implementation of *Te Whāriki*. This first evaluation in the series, undertaken in 2017, explored how early learning services were engaging with the updated *Te Whāriki*, what support leaders and kaiako had accessed, the perceived barriers or challenges to implementation, and what further support leaders and kaiako needed in order to implement *Te Whāriki*.

This first evaluation report provides the Ministry and the wider early childhood education sector with a 'temperature take' on how early learning services are beginning to work with *Te Whāriki*, their involvement in professional learning and development, and the awareness leaders and kaiako have of the updated curriculum document. The data gathering for this evaluation happened at a time when *Te Whāriki* (2017) had just been published and the rollout of professional learning and development (PLD) had just begun. Leaders and kaiako in early learning services were starting to engage with PLD opportunities and to explore and unpack *Te Whāriki*.



What ERO did

In this evaluation, ERO wanted to find out how aware and confident leaders and kaiako in early learning services were as they began to work with the updated curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (2017).

The evaluation focused on:

- service leaders' and kaiako awareness of Te Whāriki and their confidence to work with it
- any professional learning and development (PLD) accessed to support service leaders and kaiako to implement Te Whāriki and the usefulness of this PLD
- any perceived barriers and challenges faced in beginning to work with the updated curriculum.

In early learning services¹ having an ERO review in Terms 3 and 4, 2017 we asked leaders and kaiako to complete a questionnaire before the onsite stage of their review. ERO review teams discussed the responses to the questionnaire with leaders and/or kaiako while onsite, and added additional comments to the questionnaire. The responses from leaders and/or kaiako and the comments from ERO review teams make up the sources of data used for this evaluation report. ERO gathered information from 290 early learning services. Further information about the services in this evaluation is in Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 outlines ERO's evaluation framework and approach to data gathering and synthesis.

¹ Excluding Ngā Kōhanga Reo.

Key findings

Leaders and kaiako reported a high degree of awareness of, and growing confidence to begin to work with, *Te Whāriki*. Eighty-one percent reported they were confident to work with the updated curriculum document and just over half of these were already considering how to implement the updated curriculum. However, confidence to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children to enjoy educational success as Māori was not as high. Thirty-one percent of services indicated they were not at all confident or somewhat confident to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori learners. Strong pedagogical leadership and kaiako having a good understanding of *Te Whāriki* (1996) helped with implementing the updated curriculum.

Uptake of PLD was high. Eighty percent of the 290 services had accessed PLD from the range of opportunities available. These included Ministry of Education funded [workshops, online webinars, online resources](#), PLD by other providers, and use of 'in-house' expertise. PLD was reported as useful or very useful by two-thirds of services. The webinars were most useful as they provided an opportunity for teams to learn together. PLD was not so useful for leaders and kaiako in some services because they felt it was not pitched to the right level for them.

In most of the services, leaders and kaiako were considering the implications of *Te Whāriki* for their assessment, planning and evaluation processes and practices. A common starting point was to focus on assessment by using the language of *Te Whāriki* in assessment documentation. A few services were revisiting their expectations for children's learning and kaiako were deepening their understandings about children's learning.

Barriers to services beginning to implement *Te Whāriki* were time and leader/kaiako knowledge and understanding of the curriculum.

Next steps for these services included opportunities to meet and engage in professional discussion, unpacking and making sense of *Te Whāriki*, ongoing and targeted PLD, and revisiting their curriculum through in depth internal evaluation and inquiry.

ERO is continuing to evaluate the awareness and confidence of service leaders and kaiako as they begin to implement *Te Whāriki*. The next phase continues to focus on awareness and confidence. A further evaluation report will be published later in 2018 on the findings of the next phase of this evaluation.



What ERO found

Awareness and confidence

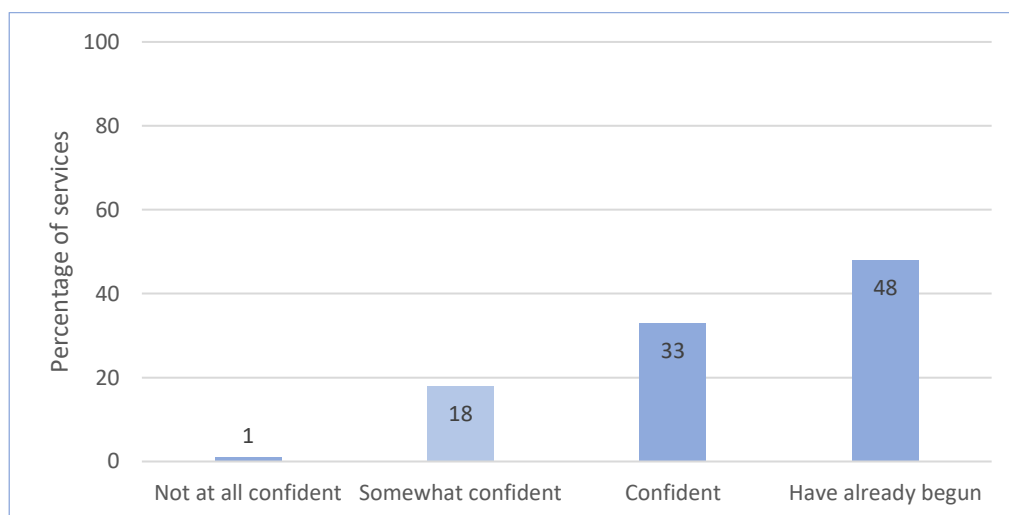
ERO's findings show a high level of awareness of, and growing confidence among leaders and kaiako in working with, *Te Whāriki*. Leaders and kaiako like the simplicity, layout and user-friendly language of the updated curriculum.

Leaders and kaiako in all of the early learning services reported they were aware of the updated *Te Whāriki*, with just over half reporting they were already considering how to use the curriculum document. Attendance at, and engagement with, professional learning and development opportunities were supporting leaders and kaiako to delve into *Te Whāriki*. Unpacking the document and becoming familiar with the content was a starting point for many services. Thinking about the implications for their service required more time and a commitment to rich professional discussions.

Confidence to work with *Te Whāriki*

As shown in Figure 1, leaders and kaiako reported positively on their confidence to work with *Te Whāriki* with 81 percent confident and just over half of these services already beginning to work with the curriculum document.

Figure 1: Confidence to work with *Te Whāriki*



Leaders and kaiako who had already begun to work with *Te Whāriki* reported their excitement and enthusiasm for the updated curriculum. PLD was important in helping leaders and kaiako to begin to implement the curriculum. In most of these services leaders and kaiako noted that they were using aspects of *Te Whāriki* as part of their assessment practices.

Leaders and/or kaiako who were confident to work with *Te Whāriki* commented on the important role leaders played in building confidence of kaiako and the leadership opportunities being afforded to kaiako to guide those less confident.

They also noted that kaiako were not all at the same level of confidence and this posed some challenges. ERO also found within this group of 'confident' services there was a 'mix of confidence' amongst kaiako to work with *Te Whāriki* and identified the need for strong leadership.

Services where leaders and kaiako rated themselves somewhat confident reported they needed more time to read and become familiar with *Te Whāriki* and access to more PLD. They also commented on the varying levels of understanding of *Te Whāriki* and curriculum in general in their teaching teams. Access to targeted PLD was critical for these services to move forward, particularly for leaders.

In the one percent of services (four services) where leaders and kaiako were not confident to work with *Te Whāriki* ERO found one or more of the following issues:

- a lack of pedagogical leadership
- a lack of leader and kaiako knowledge of curriculum
- leaders and kaiako had not yet accessed any PLD
- a lack of interest in unpacking and engaging with *Te Whāriki*.

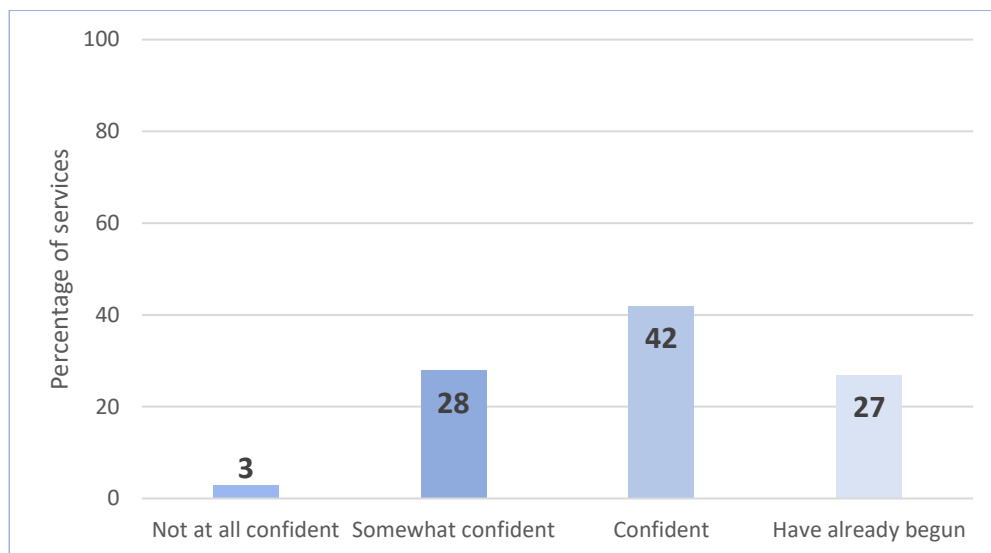
ERO individual review reports² for these services where leaders and kaiako were not confident to work with *Te Whāriki* indicated they 'required further development' and their next ERO review would be within two years.

² The ERO report referred to is the confirmed report published after the service's ERO review.

Confidence to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children

Leaders and kaiako reported less confidence in working with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children to experience educational success as Māori. As shown in Figure 2 two-thirds of services were either confident or had already begun to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori learners.

Figure 2: Confidence to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children



Leaders and kaiako identified the lack of support from external PLD providers as a barrier to building confidence. In one service they noted that this was quite ‘daunting’ for them. A lack of pedagogical knowledge and leadership was a key issue for services where leaders and kaiako were not confident to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children.

In a few services, leaders said there were no Māori children at their service (implying they did not need to develop this confidence). Others commented *Te Whāriki* had prompted them to have a discussion about cultural identity. A few were considering how they might undertake an evaluation “with Māori learners in mind.” As with more general confidence to work with *Te Whāriki*, ERO also found wide variation in kaiako knowledge and understanding of how to support Māori learners. Leaders and kaiako in some of these services had a goal about working with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori learners as part of their appraisal. In other services it was part of their strategic focus.

In services where leaders and kaiako were confident to work with *Te Whāriki* to support Māori children many said they were focused on building partnerships with whānau of Māori children and integrating whānau aspirations into their curriculum. Leaders and kaiako were thinking about and discussing their understandings of the terms ‘language, culture and identity’. The whakatauki in *Te Whāriki* were seen as useful by some services as prompts for their planning for Māori children.

In one of the 'confident' services leaders and kaiako commented:

Culture and Identity is part of our philosophy in our kindergarten. We strive to provide the best service to our tamariki and whānau by being active researchers regarding Whakapapa, Turangawaewae, Ahikaa, Pepeha all aspects of Belonging. Ensuring our tamariki are grounded and immersed in their history, culture and knowledge. Their ways of doing and being.

Leader/kaiako - Kindergarten

ERO found that promoting educational success for Māori children as opposed to implementing a bicultural curriculum was not well understood in many services. This aligns with ERO's 2013 report [Working with Te Whāriki](#) which noted:

The findings of this evaluation also suggest that there are some misunderstandings about the nature of a bicultural curriculum and the difference between providing a bicultural curriculum for all children and supporting Māori children to experience success as Māori. This is an area for further investigation.

Some of the leaders and kaiako in services that reported they had 'already begun' to work with Te Whāriki to support Māori learners were drawing on [Tātaiako](#) and [Te Whatu Pōkeka](#) to support their developing knowledge and understandings. ERO reviewers commented for one service:

Senior leaders are confidently using Te Whāriki to support their work in this area. The responsibilities of kaiako and whānau partnership concepts included within the document are being used to challenge teachers thinking. The Kaitakawaenga Māori has used the definitions of the principles to support greater understanding of kaupapa Māori within the curriculum and what this means for tamariki and whānau Māori.

Recent PLD involved all teachers in collegial and professional discussions around kaupapa Māori educational theory mentioned in Te Whāriki 2017 and the responsibility to discover and acknowledge 'who the child is and what they bring'. This, alongside PLD on Te Whatu Pōkeka, has resulted in a shift in how teachers engage with whānau Māori and how these principles are reflected within assessment, planning and evaluation. Teachers are utilising whakatauaki in Te Whāriki to reflect on and respond to Māori children. This appears to be shifting teachers' pedagogical framing for these children. ERO team – Kindergarten



Supporting services to work with *Te Whāriki*

ERO was interested in whether leaders and/or kaiako had engaged in, or attended, any PLD and the usefulness of this PLD in helping develop knowledge and understanding of *Te Whāriki* 2017.

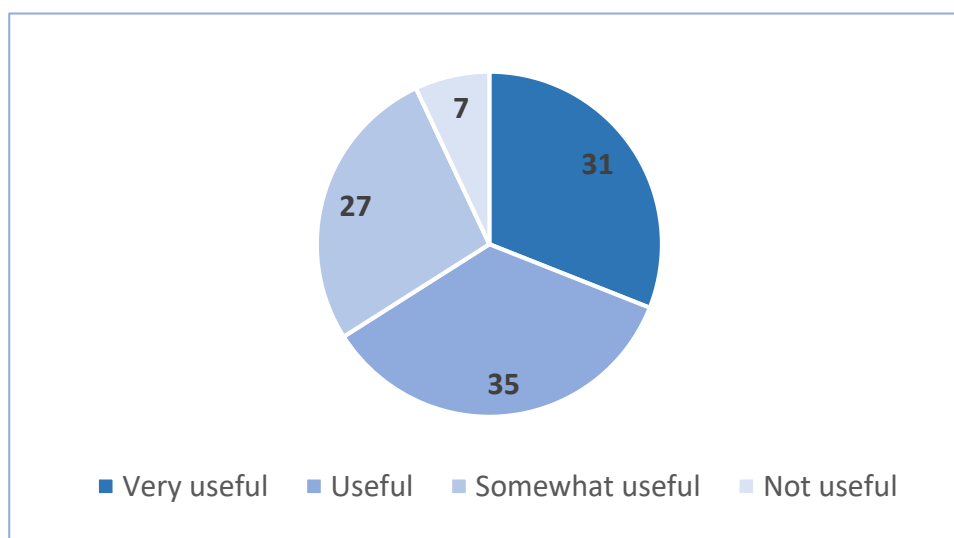
Eighty percent of the 290 services had engaged in some form of PLD at the time of their ERO review. Most of this PLD was funded by the Ministry of Education and included [workshops and webinars](#). Attendance at PLD was a mix of whole teaching teams, only leaders or only teachers.

We were interested in finding out about how leaders and/or kaiako were sharing their learning from attendance at, and engagement in, PLD. In most services sharing from PLD happened at staff/team meetings with leaders and/or kaiako sharing reflections and resources and discussing implications for their practice. Comments from leaders and kaiako indicated that it was more useful when the whole team attended PLD or engaged in the webinars and workshops together.

Usefulness of PLD

ERO asked leaders and kaiako about the usefulness of the PLD they had engaged in or attended. As shown in Figure 3 two-thirds of the leaders and kaiako reported that the PLD had been either useful or very useful.

Figure 3: Usefulness of PLD



Leaders and kaiako commented that PLD was very useful when everyone from a service was able to attend and hear the same messages. It was seen as a good way for teams to learn together. However this was not always possible in some services because of the timing of PLD and the costs associated with releasing teams to attend PLD. PLD was not so useful when it did not address variability in kaiako and leader knowledge and understanding, particularly when it was pitched at a very low or basic level.

Figure 4 details what leaders and kaiako told ERO about the usefulness of the PLD they had engaged in or attended.

Figure 4: Usefulness of PLD engaged in or attended

Very useful for leaders and kaiako in early learning services: 31 percent	Useful for leaders and kaiako in early learning services: 35 percent	Somewhat useful for leaders and kaiako in early learning services: 27 percent	Not useful for leaders and kaiako in early learning services: 7 percent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinars most useful and enabled everyone to attend PLD. • Lots of practical ideas in the webinars. • Everyone hears the same message. • Range of PLD options allows for interaction and deeper understandings. • Renewed focus on Māori and Pacific children's learning. • Supported teachers to 'weave' their curriculum by engaging in critical inquiry. • PLD gave kaiako confidence to use Te Whāriki. • It ignited a professional spark for kaiako. • PLD provided a good way for teams to learn together. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD was useful in raising the importance of parents' aspirations. • Support from professional leaders has helped with understanding Te Whāriki. • Already unpacking Te Whāriki through a series of staff discussions. • Sessions useful as they had practical ideas for working with children. • Enabled individual kaiako reflection and then to come together as a team to strengthen shared understandings. • Using the 'outcome' cards to reflect on what's on top for the programme and for children. • PLD helped kaiako to refine their next steps in working in partnership with parents and whānau. • Use of the reflective questions as prompts for further discussion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop was very basic and pitched at a low level. • More interaction was needed. • Needed more practical examples of how Te Whāriki can be implemented into assessment and planning. • Kaiako needed to read and understand Te Whāriki before attending PLD. • Variable understanding and experience of leaders and kaiako. • Timing, location and spaces available were major challenges for leaders and kaiako attending the workshops. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD was disorganised and services didn't have copies of Te Whāriki in time for the workshops. • PLD facilitators talked about the background of the updated Te Whāriki and not the updated content. • Webinar was seen as very basic and more suitable for teachers in training. • Not enough spaces at workshops. • Technology issues faced with accessing webinars. • High numbers of people at PLD so unable to engage in conversations.

Access to online resources

In the questionnaire, ERO asked leaders and kaiako if they were aware of the [online resources](#) available on [Te Kete Ipurangi](#) (TKI) to support implementation and about the usefulness of these resources. In just over three-quarters of the services, leaders and kaiako reported they knew about these resources, and most considered them to be 'useful' or 'very useful'. In many of these services leaders and kaiako said they were aware of the resources available but were yet to fully explore them. In some services leaders and kaiako were integrating TKI resources into their practice. In one service the resources were proving useful for the work happening as part of their involvement in a [Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning](#).

The Kāhui Ako that this service belongs to have an oral literacy focus and they have found the resources useful for this. Individual teachers are accessing the resources and they like that they can access them from home. They also commented that they like the readings and links to other sites or resources. ERO team comment - Kindergarten

In some services leaders and kaiako were aware of TKI and were exploring the resources with the [webinars and sets of cards](#) (learning outcomes and kaiako responsibilities) proving most popular. Some services integrated these cards into team meetings and internal PLD. Leaders and kaiako also appreciated being able to have access to a copy of *Te Whāriki* (2017) from the TKI website. Other services leaders and kaiako told ERO they found navigation of the TKI website and finding the content they were looking for difficult. Some also had limited technical expertise to help them navigate or use the online resources. In others, leaders and/or kaiako said they were not clear about the value of the online resources and preferred hard copy resources or thought that TKI was only for schools.

Expertise and resources

We asked leaders and kaiako about the expertise and resources they had to support the implementation of *Te Whāriki* in their service and what support they needed. Leadership at the service level, and at the governing organisation level in some services, supported kaiako as they began to implement *Te Whāriki*. Leaders provided opportunities for kaiako to meet and discuss *Te Whāriki* and share relevant resources.

In some services, leaders expressed confidence in kaiako being able to work with *Te Whāriki*, especially those who were qualified, experienced and/or familiar with *Te Whāriki* (1996). Leaders also acknowledged the value of having kaiako who were collaborative, enthusiastic and open to learning, and noted how this supported shared understanding and plans for implementation.

What were services doing as they began to work with *Te Whāriki*?

ERO asked leaders and kaiako what they saw as the implications of *Te Whāriki* for their service and if they had begun to work with it to describe what they were doing. In most services, leaders and kaiako were beginning to think about the implications of the updated curriculum for their assessment, planning and evaluation processes and practices. Some were looking more closely at their bicultural curriculum, and exploring how they could develop a culturally responsive curriculum in line with expectations in the updated curriculum.

Comments from leaders and kaiako indicated the most common starting point was to look at assessment practices. This included:

- revisiting expectations for children's learning and development
- documenting children's learning in 'a new light'
- deepening of understanding about children's learning
- making links between children's interests and the learning outcomes
- better analysis of children's learning
- using the language of *Te Whāriki* in assessment narratives
- refining assessment processes and aligning the learning outcomes to these processes.

As a leader in one service noted:

[Te Whāriki] brings us back to the actual curriculum - we have had a big focus on dispositional learning. Teachers have become a bit complacent because we know Te Whāriki so well. Having the learning outcomes in Te Whāriki reduced will support more of a focus on learning as well.

Other implications of the updated curriculum for services included:

- more emphasis on bicultural practice in *Te Whāriki* helping to deepen understanding and widen the lens kaiako use
- supporting shared understandings of curriculum and thinking about priorities for children's learning
- incorporating the language of *Te Whāriki* into planning, assessment and evaluation
- using the learning outcomes to engage in more in depth planning
- promoting thinking about what a culturally responsive curriculum looks like
- using the reflective questions in *Te Whāriki* to promote reflection and more in depth inquiry and evaluation
- looking more deeply at the kaiako responsibilities (p59) in [Te Whāriki](#)
- sharing information about *Te Whāriki* with parents and strengthening connections with parents and whānau
- supporting transitions to school and strengthening connections with *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

In one service the leader noted:

We are focusing on ensuring that we weave the curriculum locally – ensuring the learning we value is explicit. Looking at the strands and principles to say, for example “What does contribution look like at our centre?”

Te Whāriki was helping services to revisit and strengthen assessment, planning and evaluation, and to weave the learning outcomes into assessment information. It was also informing reviews of philosophies, assessment practices, planning, and curriculum design. In many services *Te Whāriki* was seen as a way of connecting curriculum to their priorities for learning based on children's strengths, interests and needs rather than imposing a pre-determined curriculum on children.

What were the barriers, challenges and next steps?

ERO was interested in finding out what leaders and kaiako saw as barriers or challenges to working with *Te Whāriki*. The two key barriers related to **time** and **leader and kaiako knowledge and understanding** of the curriculum.

Leaders and kaiako in many services reported a lack of time as a major barrier for them. This included having time:

- to read the curriculum document
- to get their 'heads around it'
- to develop a deep and shared understanding
- to explore and unpack the document
- to meet as a whole team to discuss, reflect on and start to work with the curriculum
- for PLD including engaging with the webinars.

Working with a new curriculum requires time for leaders and kaiako to become familiar with the document and what it means for their curriculum. Time for professional collaboration and debate is limited in many services, often because non-contact time is scheduled for individual teachers and the only time they have to meet together is at the end of the day or in the evenings.

The area of leader and kaiako knowledge and understanding of curriculum, including assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation, has already been highlighted in this report in relation to confidence to work with *Te Whāriki*. Leaders and kaiako reported the range of teaching experience and variation in initial teacher education and resulting qualifications were barriers to working with *Te Whāriki*. Concerns were also raised about the lack of knowledge of unqualified teachers, relievers and qualified teachers from overseas. The disparity in leader and kaiako knowledge and understanding is an area that needs to be addressed, not just at the individual service level, but also at a system level. ERO review teams found some resistance to change in a few services with leaders and/or kaiako 'wedded' to the previous 1996 *Te Whāriki*. Leaders and/or kaiako were set in their ways, or held the view that *Te Whāriki* did not need updating.

Other barriers and/or challenges for services included lack of access to PLD and resources to support implementation, staff turnover, isolation and issues with technology. Access to PLD was problematic for some services, particularly those in more rural or isolated areas. Other access issues included limited spaces in workshops, timing of PLD sessions and the lack of timely notification of workshops. Leaders and kaiako commented that the webinars did not suit everyone and some had concerns about the poor quality of the PLD available.

Not having enough copies of *Te Whāriki* to give each leader and kaiako a copy was an issue for some services along with technology issues in accessing webinars and other online resources. In a few services staff turnover was impacting on implementation.

ERO asked leaders and kaiako about their next steps and how they will make sure they have the confidence and skills to implement *Te Whāriki* going forward. Leaders and kaiako identified key next steps and these included team meetings and profession discussions, ongoing and targeted PLD, revisiting their curriculum and more in depth internal evaluation and inquiry. Each of these is discussed below.

Team meetings and opportunities for professional discussions were seen by leaders and kaiako as critical to implementation of *Te Whāriki*. Dedicated time to meet and unpack *Te Whāriki* and to share and support each other was a next step for many services. Conversations needed to be open and honest and include discussion about what *Te Whāriki* looks like in practice and what might need to be reviewed or changed.

Access to PLD or further PLD targeted to individual needs was seen as critical to implementation. Some services planned to engage with the webinars and access the [online resources](#) and explore these in more depth. Others planned to make use of their internal expertise, along with reading research and relevant articles. Building leader and kaiako knowledge and shared understandings of what *Te Whāriki* means for their service needs to be a specific focus for PLD.

Engaging in further work on curriculum-related practice was a next step for many services, particularly in relation to the responsiveness of their curriculum for every child and in terms of identifying priorities for children's learning. Other aspects included:

- increasing their focus on intentional teaching
- looking more closely at how to support Māori children
- exploring what the concept of a 'local curriculum' means in practice
- unpacking the learning outcomes "what will these look like in our service?"
- developing centre values and priorities for children's learning
- identifying shifts in kaiako practice
- delving deeper into Māori pedagogy
- using *Te Whāriki* to identify what is not at the forefront of the service's curriculum.

In some services leaders and kaiako were exploring how they might use the reflective questions in *Te Whāriki* to help them focus their internal evaluation (self review). Others were undertaking a review of policies to align them to *Te Whāriki*. Many saw internal evaluation as an opportunity to review their assessment, planning and evaluating processes and practices and to look more deeply at how their philosophy links to and reflects *Te Whāriki*.

The following examples show what service leaders and kaiako saw as their next steps.

We want to inquire into how effectively are we are making Te Whāriki visible, moving beyond the language and casting deeper and wider into the full promise of our curriculum.

Leader/kaiako – Education and care centre

As a centre we need to strengthen the documentation process of our children's learning in light of our rich curriculum. We will be looking at forming an evaluative question exploring how effectively we currently do this and how to improve our systems of collating and collecting information regarding children's learning.

Leader/kaiako – Education and care centre

Other areas of focus for services included incorporating the implementation of *Te Whāriki* as part of the service's strategic planning; strengthening engagement with parents and whānau; using appraisal and development processes to support implementation of *Te Whāriki*; and sharing and unpacking *Te Whāriki* with other kaiako in the context of a Kāhui Ako | Community of Learning.



Conclusion

ERO's findings in this evaluation resonate with those in many recent national evaluations. In particular, they reflect ERO's 2016 findings in [Early Learning Curriculum](#) which highlighted the importance of pedagogical leadership. Pedagogical leaders need to have the capability to build kaiako knowledge and understanding of *Te Whāriki* and what it means for their intentional teaching practice. They support kaiako to work collaboratively to design and implement a rich and responsive curriculum for every child.

The findings also highlight the need for ongoing PLD to address variability in kaiako knowledge and understanding of curriculum in general. Leaders in some services have reported that variability in kaiako knowledge of the curriculum and experience are barriers to effective implementation. ERO's evidence supports this finding and notes this is an area that PLD and initial teacher education will need to address if *Te Whāriki* is to be fully implemented. Service leaders and kaiako also reported that time to engage in PLD and build understanding and confidence are major barriers in many services.

In its 2013 report, [Working with Te Whāriki](#), ERO asked "does *Te Whāriki* offer sufficient stretch and challenge?"

A consequence of this comfort with the principles and strands is that there is a sense that Te Whāriki no longer provides stretch or challenge for many services. It may be that the issue lies with the broad nature of the prescribed framework or it may be that leaders and teachers do not have the theoretical and pedagogical knowledge to effectively implement this framework. ERO cited Smith (2011, p.151) who noted:

*"Rather than producing recipes for what to do, Te Whāriki makes bigger demands on teachers and challenges them to apply theoretical knowledge to their practice. Effective implementation of Te Whāriki demands interpretation, reflection, dialogue, careful planning, observation and consultation with parents/whānau and children."*³

ERO has identified an emerging focus on internal evaluation – an intention to engage with *Te Whāriki* and use aspects of the document to critique and reflect on practice. Some services were looking at ways they can work with parents and whānau to increase their understanding of the updated curriculum, and some were exploring how they could use *Te Whāriki* to support transition to school.

³ Smith, A. B. (2011). Relationships with people, places and things – *Te Whāriki*. Miller, L. and Pound L. (eds) Theories and Approaches to Learning in the Early Years. pp 149-162. Sage, London.

As awareness increases and confidence to implement *Te Whāriki* grows, ERO expects to see increased understanding of the complexity and depth of the curriculum. The Ministry has identified the following areas that need to be strengthened:

- rich curriculum for every child
- a focus in the learning that matters
- affirming each child's identity, language and culture
- parents and whānau engaged in their child's learning
- personalised pathways to school.

Addressing these areas is crucial to realising [the vision Te Whāriki](#) has for all learners.

Underpinning Te Whāriki is the vision that children are competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society. p.8.

Recommendations

ERO recommends leaders in early learning services:

- identify their professional learning and development priorities to better target PLD to individual leader and kaiako needs
- “What PLD do we need in our service, for whom, why and by when?”
- give priority to allocating time for kaiako to build their capability and capacity to effectively implement *Te Whāriki* (2017).



Appendix 1: Sample of early learning services

Table 1: Service type

Service Type	Number of services in sample	Percentage of services in sample	National percentage of services
Home-based	17	6%	9%
Playcentre	23	8%	11%
Kindergarten	40	14%	17%
Education and care service	210	72%	63%
Total	290	100%	100%

As shown in Table 1 this sample was closely representative of national figures. Kindergartens, Playcentres and home-based education and care services are under-represented. These differences are statistically significant.⁴

Table 2: Location

Location	Number of services in sample	Percentage of services in sample	National percentage of services
Main urban area	217	75%	74%
Minor urban area	27	9%	11%
Secondary urban area	22	8%	6%
Rural area	24	8%	9%
Total	290	100%	100%

As shown in Table 2 this sample was representative of national figures. These differences are not statistically significant.

⁴ The differences between observed and expected values in Tables 1 and 2 were tested using a Chi square test. The level of statistical significance for all statistical tests in this report was $p < 0.05$.

Table 3: ERO return time

Return Time	Percentage of services in sample
Not well placed Next review in consultation with the Ministry of Education	1%
Requires further development (within 2 years)	10%
Well placed 3 years	80%
Very well placed 4 years	9%
Total	100%



Appendix 2: Evaluation framework – questions we asked

1. How aware are you/your team of *Te Whāriki* (2017)?
2. Have you/your team attended any professional learning and development sessions on *Te Whāriki* (2017)?

If yes, how useful was this session in helping you/your team develop your knowledge and understanding of *Te Whāriki* (2017)?

3. Do you/your team know about the [resources on TKI](#) to support implementation of *Te Whāriki* (2017)?

If yes, how useful were these resources?

4. What do you see as the implications of *Te Whāriki* (2017) for your service?
5. How confident are you/your team to begin to work with *Te Whāriki* (2017)?
6. How confident are you/your team to work with *Te Whāriki* (2017) to support Māori to enjoy educational success as Māori?
7. If you/your team have already begun to consider how you might work with *Te Whāriki* (2017), please describe what you are doing:
8. What are your/your team's next steps in beginning to work with *Te Whāriki* (2017)? What will you do differently?
9. What do you see as the barriers or challenges as you/your team begin to work with *Te Whāriki* (2017)?
10. What expertise and resources do you already have to support your service to implement *Te Whāriki* (2017)?
11. How will you ensure that your team will have the confidence and skills to implement *Te Whāriki* (2017)?
12. Is there anything further you/your team need to help implement *Te Whāriki* (2017) in your service?
13. How will you address those needs?