Special issue: Professionalism in e.c.e.

Thinking together about teaching •

Playcentre as a professional system •

Self review and Te Ao Māori •

Contents

Early Education vol. 52 Spring / Summer 2012

Advisory Board

Kerry Bethell, Carmen Dalli, Lyn Foote, Barbara Jordan, Lesieli McIntyre, Kimberley Powell, Jenny Ritchie.

Editors:

Dr Claire McLachlan, Massey University

Dr. Sue Stover, AUT University

Guest Editor

Dr Carmen Dalli

Design and layout

Ben Watts – www.noize.co.nz

Our thanks to

Emeritus Prof Linda Miller, Open University, Dr Jan Peeters, University of Ghent, Belgium, Associate Professor Mathias Urban, University of East London, Associate Professor Joce Nuttall, Catholic University, Melbourne, Dr Iris Duhn, Monash University, Melbourne, Associate Professor Christine Woodrow, University of Western Sydney, Dr Sarah Te One, Victoria University of Wellington, Dr Jayne White, Waikato University, Dr Judith Loveridge, Victoria University of Wellington.

The Covers

Front cover: What does ec professionalism look like alongside 'small people'? A moment of respectful negotiation: Josie Liu and Isaac Pearson consider footwear on a ramp at The Learning Centre, Ponsonby, Auckland. Photo: Courtesy of Leanne Ray

Back cover: What does ec professionalism look like alongside 'big kids'? Wendy Downey, head teacher at Whangaparaoa Kindergarten with her castle-makers. Photo: Courtesy of Northern Auckland Kindergarten Association

Subscriptions

Subscriptions run for a calendar year. Late subscribers receive back issues for that year (this may be supplied digitally – as .pdf files)

Annual subscriptions are as follows:
Students: $20 (please supply a copy of current student ID)
Individuals: $25
Organisations/Centres: $30
International subscribers are asked to add a further $10.
To request a current subscription form, please email: eejournal@aut.ac.nz

Contributions

Contributions of articles and photos are welcome from the early childhood community. Please keep copies of any contributions as we cannot guarantee to return what is sent. Cover photos need to be 'high resolution'.

What is the future of 'Early Education'?

"He tomokanga paepae he ara ki te aotūroa."

"Crossing a threshold leads to a path towards the future".

Over the next few months, the editors of 'Early Education' will be consulting its subscribers and the EC sector more broadly about future directions.

For example, should we continue with a paper-based publication? Or go online?

Should we continue with a subscription base? If so, how can we build that base?

We know our readers will be interested in the 'threshold' that we are crossing and will have opinions to share with us. So during 2013 please be ready to help us chart our next steps.

Sue Stover and Claire McLachlan,

Editors

What is early childhood professionalism?

In 1974, Peter Dinniss asked whether New Zealand early childhood education (e.c.e.) – then considered as encompassing kindergartens and playcentres – could be called a profession. Dinniss saw training programmes, and an awareness of the need for evaluation against clear aims and objectives as two key indicators of an emerging trend to professionalise e.c.e. This stocktaking approach to discussing professionalism, with established definitions of a profession acting as the measuring stick, remained common internationally during the 1980s (e.g., Katz, 1985) and the 1990s (e.g., Dalli, 1993).

However, this type of professionalisation based on the attainment of specific structural benchmarks, including lengthy training, has not been unproblematic. For example, Dalli (1993) questioned the appropriateness of traditional criteria of 'autonomy' and 'optimal distance' from clients as desirable elements within a definition of early childhood professionalism. In a sector where partnership with parents is strongly advocated and where "untrained" adults as educators in services like Playcentre and ngā kohanga reo are a valued historical legacy, these traditional criteria of what makes a profession are challenging. Australians Hughes and MacNaughton (2000) have pointed out that a profession based on structural characteristics is by its nature exclusive and thus creates divisions – the "othering" of individuals and groups.

Critical perspectives on the professionalisation project in early childhood education became increasingly prominent in the late 1990s, signalling that despite the introduction of pedagogical and regulatory frameworks and a pervasive terminology of professionalism, the concept is not easy to pin down. Rather, in the new millennium a new discourse emerged highlighting diversity and contextual relativity in understandings of professionalism. In the European region this was driven by the realisation that the role of an early childhood practitioner is embedded in cultural and historical meanings (e.g., Oberhuemer, 2000) as illustrated by the different terms used to refer to those working in the early childhood arena. For example, the *early childhood pedagogue* works with children from birth to school entry at 7 or 6 years in Finland, Sweden and Spain; the *teacher* in nursery and primary education in France, Ireland and the Netherlands works with children aged 3 to 12 years; the *preschool specialist* in Belgium, Greece and Luxembourg works with children two to three years before school entry; and *social pedagogue* is a term that in Denmark, Germany and Luxembourg can apply to those who work across the lifespan.

In New Zealand, meanwhile, awareness of the historical and cultural embeddedness of understandings of professionalism, and the ill fit that exists between some aspects of traditional definitions of a profession and the goals of high quality early childhood practice, led to the argument that a ground-up definition of early years professionalism was needed based on practitioners' own perspectives of what professionalism entails (Dalli, 2008).

Nonetheless, for many people the early childhood professionalisation project has become synonymous with a drive to higher qualifications, with regulations and accountability mechanisms acting as the policy tools to achieve the goal. Justified with arguments that early education is an effective intervention in situations of risk to children, or as investment for the future, and through discourses of school readiness and cost benefits, these measures are welcomed by some as a way of enhancing quality provision and outcomes for children and families, and criticised by others as a neo-liberal technicist project which obscures the essentially relational focus of early years practice. The ongoing marketization of early childhood education with its corporate trappings and increasing focus on measurable outcomes is also seen as part of this neoliberal technicist move (Woodrow & Press, 2007; May & Mitchell, 2009).

One response to these issues has been the emergence of the term *democratic professionalism* which Peter Moss (2008) has suggested would involve the qualities of: dialogue; critical thinking; researching; listening and openness to otherness; uncertainty and provisionality; subjectivity; border crossing; multiple perspectives; and curiosity. Certainly, New Zealand research supports these qualities as part and parcel of the desirable professional profile of early years' practitioners (Aitken, 2005; Scrivens & Duncan, 2003; Dalli, 2008). More recently Dalli (2012) has argued that in NZ there is an emerging consensus about a particular form of ec professionalism, one that is articulate about practice, agentic in curriculum planning, and focused on relationships and ethical practice.

Working closely with international colleagues within a special interest group on early childhood professionalism within the European Early Childhood Research Association, Dalli has also been exploring the concept of a critical ecology of the early childhood profession. In a project which analysed a day in the life of an early years practitioner in each of six countries, Dalli, Miller and Urban (2012) concluded that the day-to-day realities

of the practitioners in diverse local contexts shared some similarities: all worked in complex situations with individuals and groups, and all were required to bring together layers of understanding and thinking about children, families and colleagues in a curriculum that might look outwardly fragmented but is intricately connected. At the same time there were differences in the way that the practitioners articulated their role reflecting the diverse socio-historical and political contexts in which the practitioners lived their lives. This led the project team to reflect on the importance of thinking about critical reflection within professionalism as going beyond the individual practitioner and as permeating the entire professional system. In other words, in a profession that has a critical ecology, practitioners would work in an environment of constant enquiry not only into individual practice but also into the context and preconditions of this practice (Urban & Dalli, 2012).

In this themed issue of *Early Education*, the papers on early childhood professionalism enrich current international discussion. The volume starts with a letter from Judith Duncan, who has been on study leave in Vancouver. Judith explains how early childhood people in Canada have watched developments in New Zealand in recent years and reflected on the positive and not so positive outcomes of an increasingly regulated environment.

Drawn from her doctoral research, Anne Grey's paper illustrates that professionalism is a complex project and requires the active engagement of teachers.

Sue Cherrington also draws on her doctoral research in suggesting that reflective practice and greater professionalism can be prompted by teachers viewing videos of themselves in action. She also suggests that teachers as teams have habits of encouraging collaboration or attempting to 'teach' through feedback.

Claire McLachlan and Anne Grey reflect back on the notion of self-review and how it has come to be seen as part of the repertoire of skills that the modern early childhood teacher needs to possess.

Jan Mills, a senior Unitec student, examines how education reflects history and society, and that teachers have choices about how they approach directives such as to refocus on Maori education as a discourse of 'credit'.

We hope you enjoy reading this themed volume of *Early Education* and the ideas within it about the notion of professionalism in our sector; where we have come from, where we are now, and what the future may hold.

Arohanui

Carmen Dalli, Guest Editor,
with support from Claire McLachlan and
Sue Stover (Editors).

References

Aitken, H. (2005). Participation in an early childhood community of practice: The experiences of a group of newly qualified teachers. Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Dalli, C. (1993). Are we a profession? The contribution of the national curriculum guidelines and the need for a code of ethics. Keynote address. *In Proceedings of the CECUA Early Childhood National Curriculum Conference*, Christchurch.

Dalli, C. (2008). Pedagogy, knowledge and collaboration: Towards a ground-up perspective on professionalism. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16*(2), 171-185.

Dalli, C. (2012). A constant juggle for balance: A day in the life of a New Zealand kindergarten teacher. In L. Miller, C. Dalli & M. Urban (Eds.) *Early childhood grows up: Towards a critical ecology of the profession.* New York: Springer.

Dalli, C., Miller, L., & Urban, M. (2012). Early childhood grows up: Towards a critical ecology of the profession. In L. Miller, C. Dalli & M. Urban (Eds.), *Early childhood grows up: Towards a critical ecology of the profession.* New York: Springer.

Dinniss, P. (1974). Professionalism in early childhood education: Some trends. In M. Bell, P. E. Dinniss, & G. McDonald (Eds). *Some trends and issues in early childhood education.* Wellington. NZCER.

Hughes, P. & McNaughton, G. (2000). Consensus, dissensus or community: The politics of parental involvement in early childhood education. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 1(3),* 241-257.

Katz, L. (1985). The nature of professions: Where is early childhood education? In L. Katz (Ed.), *Talks with teachers of young children: A collection.* Norwood, N.J.: Ablex.

May, H. & Mitchell, L. (2009) *Strengthening community-based early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand. Report of the Quality Public Early Childhood Education Project.* Wellington: New Zealand Educational Institute –Te Riu Roa.

Moss, P. (2008). The democratic and reflective professional: Rethinking and reforming the early years workforce. In L. Miller & C. Cable (Eds). *Professionalism in the early years.* London: Hodder Education .

Oberhuemer, P. (2000). Conceptualising the professional role in early childhood centers: Emerging profiles in four European countries. *Early Childhood Research and Practice, 2*(2). Available from http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v2n2/oberhuemer.html.

Scrivens, C. & Duncan, J. (2003). What decisions? Whose decisions? Issues for professional leaders in decision-making in New Zealand childcare centres. *Early Education, 33,* 29-37.

Urban, M. & Dalli, C. (2012). A profession speaking – and thinking – for itself. In L. Miller, C. Dalli & M. Urban (Eds.), *Early childhood grows up: Towards a critical ecology of the profession.* New York: Springer.

Woodrow, C. & Press, F. (2007) (Re)positioning the child in the policy/politics of early childhood. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 39(3), 312-325. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00328.x

Letter from Vancouver

Dear colleagues in summery Aotearoa New Zealand,

"Oh, the weather outside is frightful, but fire is so delightful, and since we've no place to go, let it snow, let it snow, let it snow…"

(*Let it Snow*, written by Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne)

In the warmth of our apartment (with an electric fire) on the University of British Columbia campus and with snow covering the city, I have been reflecting on my five months sabbatical leave in Vancouver.

I have spent much of my time immersed in the British Columbia context of early childhood education: visiting centers, attending advocacy meetings and talking with directors, educators and policy officials. Those of us who travel as New Zealand early childhood teachers, academics and/or advocates are often called on to explain the gains that early childhood education (ECE) has achieved in our country over the last three decades. Our success stories are recognised internationally and others are keen to know 'how we did it' so as to influence their own early childhood policies and funding advocacy.

So I have found myself regularly called upon to trace the NZ history of the amalgamation and integration of early childhood through administration, legislation, qualifications, curriculum and union processes. In the process of retelling these stories however, I began to wonder how much of our ECE 'gains' have set the scene for many unintended consequences for undermining the diversity of the NZ ECE sector, and whether the professionalism of ECE teachers has improved the experiences of children and whānau in our settings?

Our ECE stories are particularly relevant for British Columbia (BC) early childhood advocates as they are working towards increasing acceptability for a national plan for BC early childhood education ahead of their upcoming Federal elections. I have found there are interesting comparisons between NZ and BC and in particular as regards the role and position of 'educators': those who

Judith Duncan in Vancouver

'work in early childhood education with children and their families'.

The BC plan is entitled: "Community Plan for a Public System of Integrated Early Care and Learning: $10 a day Childcare Plan" (See http://www.cccabc.bc.ca/plan/). In collaboration with the ECE sectors, financial and academic advisors, the plan was constructed by two professional advocacy and support organisations, Early Childhood Educators of BC and Coalition of Child Care Advocates BC. The proposals are impressively based on international research, and draw on the lessons wider than North America.

The need for a plan becomes urgent when the BC ECE scene is considered:

- There is only regulated EC space for about 20 percent of BC families with preschool aged children;

- Fees are incredibly high – the second highest family expense after housing;

- Wages for educators are only slightly higher than the minimum wage and are less than the Canadian living

wage. One educator told me that she now earned less than she had earned at Starbucks before she completed her early childhood qualification;

- Different ministries manage different parts of the early years services: Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Health, making co-ordination of and collaboration within the sector very difficult;

- There are significant differences in funding across the early years – little to no public funding for *child care services* (so wages for educators and fees for parents are directly in competition with each other); in contrast, school-based programmes such as *Kindergarten* and *Strong Start* (see http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/strongstart_bc/) are publically funded at no cost to parents and families (administered via Boards of Education).

- The British Columbia Early Learning Framework is recommended but not compulsory for services or centres to use (see http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/early_learning/early_learning_framework.htm).

The BC plan proposes to address the inequities of early childhood education experienced by parents, children and educators. Reminiscent of NZ campaigns from the 1960s onwards when the struggle by women for women to have both accessible, affordable childcare and to have reasonable wages for early childhood teachers was the focus, similar issues and arguments are being made to support this BC plan.

The key proposals as discussed in the plan are:

- "Cap parent fees at $10/ day for full-time, $7/day for part-time, and no user fee for families with an annual income of less than $40,000;

- "Meet improved staff education and wage levels at an average of $25 an hour plus 20 percent benefits;

- "Welcome all children, including those with extra support needs;

- "Address demonstrated community need; and

- "Offer play-based programs that are consistent with the BC Early Learning Framework or Aboriginal frameworks" (p. 14).

- "Establish a Diploma as a minimum qualification (including family child care settings and after-school age care)" (p. 19).

- "Establish a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (BECE) as the main qualification of educators"; (p. 18).

- "Develop systems of Early Years Center Networks" (p. 12).

Importantly, BC has taken notice of how in Australia and NZ increased funding and increased ECE provision has led to ECE being dominated by private and corporate interests.

The BC Plan states:

"Based on [international] evidence, [the plan] rejects commercial child care as the answer to the current child care crisis and instead looks to public systems that work well – systems that integrate child care and education under one lead Ministry (increasingly Education), and where child care and learning come together as strong and equal partners" (p. 4).

To support this public provision and funding the plan proposes "Early Years Centre Networks". These networks would cluster all of the early years care and education services (including the first years at school, and home-based services) into a unified service operated by Boards of Education in geographical areas. These 'networks' would then manage the demand for services, and respond to the needs of the communities that they are positioned within. This would provide sustainability, coherence, and responsiveness within a public framework.

Another feature, which captured my attention, was the use of the term 'educator' rather than 'teacher' to describe those working in ECE. Being old enough myself to remember the heated debates between child care workers and kindergarten teachers in the 1980s over the term that would represent ECE in the future, I was expecting a similar debate in BC. However, I was informed that in the 1970s the BC compulsory education teacher organisation, BC Teachers Federation, captured the term 'teacher' and the term is not used in BC for those working with very young children. What is being hotly debated is whether care or education should lead ECE work. In BC it is 'care and education' not 'education and care' that we talk about! That is what is so interesting.

However, the lack of teaching status and the use of the ambiguous term 'educator' do not seem to detrimentally affect the quality of the teaching in ECE centres in BC. Having spent weeks visiting BC educators in their centres, I have seen some of the most respectful and exemplary teaching and caring between educators and children that I have ever seen. The BC educators take their work very seriously and despite low wages, regularly attend professional inquiry opportunities. While they are required only to maintain 40 hours of professional development every five years, most educators engage in more than this. I believe this enthusiasm for professional learning reflects the inspirational style of leadership in the sector by BC educators for BC educators. A group entitled "Liberation Learning" is a model for early childhood teachers/educators, working together for improving ECE and supporting each other. The group describes itself in this way:

Liberation Learning was founded in 2009 when a group of child care workers banded together to help transform child care in BC and beyond. We are a grassroots network of child care workers. We meet in each other's homes, in community centres, and in church basements to talk and learn from each other, build community together, and build and sustain a

broad social movement to transform the ways we all relate to, support, and include children in community life. (See http://www.liberationlearning.ca/)

This group is a volunteer organisation of educators and provides leadership for the whole BC ECE community. Unlike our NZ organisations which closely align to our historical or organisational alliances (e.g. Te Tari Puna Ora O Aotearoa, Kindergarten Associations, Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, NZ Playcentre Federation), this group is one for all those who work in early childhood, across all organisations and employers, and provides a range of seminars, workshops and meetings to build professional opportunities for all. I have attended several of their events and have been fascinated at how very different these experiences are to those ECE organisations hold in NZ. Many of our professional events are run by ECE organisations or tertiary providers and are often a cross between a conference and a professional workshop. They can be developed in collaboration with teachers, but often have a different purpose – they may be an AGM or address a perceived need by the organisation for their members.

In contrast, the events run *by* the BC educators *for* the educators were a comfortable 'fit' with the audience. The cost, topics and styles of delivery felt to be a match with those attending and provoked discussion and conversation in a way only hoped for in many NZ events. The few functions in NZ where the focus is 'teachers talking to teachers' show similar patterns of interaction and 'real' engagement but this style is not the regular model. In contrast, the model of Liberation Learning could be followed in NZ for *effective* teacher professional development.

Having the luxury of reliving the historical NZ campaigns, (albeit in a slightly different form here in BC) has been a very valuable experience for my thinking about the future of ECE in NZ. If BC receives the support for their National Plan that they are hoping for in the next Federal election, then we should watch to see how effective they are in maintaining public provision and warding off the corporate commercialism which has been dominating Australia and New Zealand. There are many lessons to be learnt from the BC experiences for us in NZ.

I look forward to continuing the discussion about where we in Aotearoa's ECE community are heading together.

Warm regards,

Judith Duncan

A tribute:

Marie Bell 1922-2012

Sue Stover

I only met Marie Bell twice, but each was memorable. We met initially by chance in 2004. Both of us researching in the library of the Institute for Child Studies at Victoria University, and she struck up a sparkling conversation with me.

The second time was Easter 2006 when she was a very willing participant in my PhD research (see Stover, 2011). This encounter occurred at her dining room table one Saturday morning in her home on one of Wellington's steeper hills.

With a tape recorder running, I asked her to talk about how ideas about play had changed in her lifetime. I was awed by the fulsomeness of her response. It covered a sweeping timespan: from her experiences as a child in Wellington and then as the young Pakeha widow of a handsome Maori killed in World War II, right through her years as a postgraduate student of teacher education in the optimistic postwar years in London, to her many positions of influence in Wellington from the 1950s onwards: in Parents Centre, Kindergarten College, Department of Education, and in Matauranga (an alternative school she founded and led in the 1970s). She was an activist in the women's movement, deeply involved in the politics of childcare and promoted a unified e.c. sector.

In her interview with me she expressed delight that she had, in her 80s, completed her PhD documenting the pioneers of Parents Centre. Just as passionately, she expressed concern for the wellbeing of mothers and children in contemporary New Zealand. "*What have we done to motherhood?*", she asked me as she described the challenges of a mother expressing milk in a workplace toilet. ECE as she understood it in 2006 was not in the form that she and other feminists had envisaged in the 1970s and 1980s. While she recognised that there were more workplace opportunities for women, this striving for economic achievement and career options was only part of what she and other feminists had aspired to. Feminists were not just "*screaming Amazons*", she said. "*We wanted what had been seen as more feminine virtues*" as well, with women who chose to be mothers, having time and support to be mothers. Controversially she queried whether anyone who had never parented a child should be involved in policymaking as regards young children and their education.

As I continued my research with other historic leaders of leaders of e.c.e. and asked them similar questions about how ideas about play had changed, Marie's name kept cropping up – especially amongst those with strong Wellington connections. Several of her former students recalled vividly Marie's insistence that student teachers must have a long-term relationship with an infant. For Marie's students, this took the form of a two year child study.

I was also impressed by the genuine affection and respect held for her by former students and colleagues. As one said of Marie: *"I mean – she was so alive!"*.

From her own account, Marie's cross-fertilising of ideas happened not only in her voluntary and her academic roles, but also as a civil servant. She described for me how during the Department of Education's *"glory days"* in 1975, she took a leadership role in two national conventions; one for women and the other for early childhood education. She took these roles in part because she needed to show that she could live up to her own teaching. Moving into what opportunities come along was what she had taught other women to do in 'assertiveness training' – not to turn down opportunities that presented themselves. She laughed and recalled how men *"rush off and find their mates and get advice"*. Women, she said *"have got to do the same"*.

As convenor of the 2nd early childhood convention, Marie Bell *"sold the idea"* of inviting Urie Bronfenbrenner to speak. Bronfenbrenner was not a familiar name to the rest of the organising committee, but he was one of Marie's *"big influences"*. So, she phoned him:
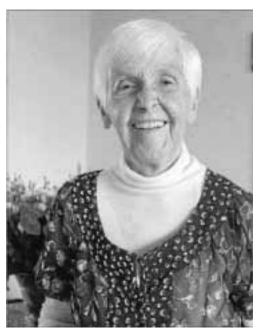
… it was like talking to God! He came to the phone and I introduced myself and said what we're on about and he said, 'I'll go and look at my diary' and off he went and came back and said 'Yes, I've got nothing on then, and I've never been to New Zealand'.

So we flew him out…. He turned up with his lovely wife, Lise, and I was given time off to take them around the country …. And oh, he was very impressed and they were impressed with him – and he launched his book – 'The Ecology of Early Childhood' – at that convention.

According to Marie, the 2nd e.c. convention of 1978 was a watershed in that it attracted *"Everybody who's anybody in early childhood"*.

This aspiration – to create a more unified early childhood sector – was also evident in her work within the Department of Education. Through inviting diverse preschool providers to interact at teacher refresher courses, she was pivotal in creating conversations across the sometimes quarrelsome services. It was Marie who in the early 1980s was given the task of establishing teacher training for the early years within teachers colleges. This involved closing kindergarten colleges and a loss of freedom that she and others had experienced within those colleges.

She recalled as a kindergarten lecturer herself how she had worked experientially with students: young women who had just left *"extremely structured"* secondary schools and

Marie Bell

Photo courtesy of 'The Wellingtonian'

who were somehow expected to understand little children. To encourage students to open up to what is means to play fulsomely, she would set up a simulated kindergarten classroom in which half of the class spent the day as 'four year olds', and the other half tried to 'teach' them: *"And you had a whole room absolutely cleared – they had lino on the floor – and the fingerpaint, well! They ended up taking off their shoes, doing it with their feet and -- hilarious! Really, it was just revealing."*

Talking afterwards was an essential part of the learning experience: *"… sharing what it felt like and how it would be to be a kid and what they got out of it."* Such discussion groups were a valued part of adult education, and according to Marie, provided opportunity for argument, and for experience to be *"digested"*.

For the early childhood community, the legacy of Marie Bell is far greater than I've been able to capture in my two brief encounters with her. But I know my experience of Marie was typical of the many people who were touched by this vital and insightful woman. She was luminous.

Reference

Stover, S. (2011). *Play's progress? Locating play in the educationalisation of early childhood*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Auckland: AUT University. Available from http://aut. researchgateway.ac.nz/handle/10292/2864

The inside-out professional

A framework for reflection and practice

Anne Grey

Abstract:

Professions and professionals have often been identified by a set of attributes, and within the early childhood field, this way of defining the early childhood professional emerged with the advent of regulations and qualifications that provided externally-formed standards. This article supports an alternative view: that early childhood professionalism should be formed by early childhood teachers themselves. This view of early childhood professionalism would be continually debated and discussed as it would be based on the complex, multi-faceted and unique work they do, as well the values that underpin this work. This view of professionalism is one that, rather than being fixed, static or externally formed, is always in the process of being socially constructed.

In the last decade, early childhood education practitioners in Aotearoa New Zealand have undergone a period of rapid change that has impacted on their professional image and identity. A significant aspect of this change is that more early childhood (e.c.) practitioners are now 'professional teachers', educated to teach by gaining a teaching qualification and eligible for registration with the New Zealand Teachers Council (Hall, 2008). The emphasis on professionalisation has given impetus to the debate about what is 'professional', and whether the prevailing definitions of what it is to be professional apply to early childhood teachers.

This article examines the complexity of professionalism in early childhood education from three different viewpoints, or 'lenses'. The first view is the traditional lens whereby a professional is defined by a set of attributes that differentiates those worthy of professional status from others (Marsh, 2008; Nurse, 2007). The second is the regulatory lens whereby a professional is defined by compliance to a set of standards (Moss, J., 2013). The third approach is an alternative view of professionalism based on the complex and unique work that early childhood teachers do and the values that underpin this work (Dalli, 2006, 2008). This article contends that although the first two approaches are not to be dismissed, it is vital that early childhood education teachers themselves adopt an approach to professionalism that reflects on and reviews the multifaceted work that is undertaken on a daily basis with young children and their families.

The attributes view of professionalism

Traditionally those who belonged to a profession, such as law or medicine, were defined by specific attributes. These included gaining expert knowledge before being allowed to practice, accepting the boundaries and regulations of the profession, and abiding by the code of ethics of the profession. It was considered that an appropriate attribute of a professional was a high degree of autonomy in the work environment, high status and a higher salary than a non-professional could expect (Ingersoll & Perda, 2008). In return, professionals were expected to exercise informed decision-making and maintain confidentiality (Dall'alba, 2009). As a result, these traditional professions were viewed as elitist because "the power, status and rewards remain with those lucky enough to be admitted to the select group" (Nurse, 2007, p. 3).

Drawing on the attributes view of professionalism, Katz (1985, 1995) described an early childhood professional as one who has developed specialised knowledge, who uses that knowledge for informed decision-making, and who practices at a high standard. This view of professionalism has been accepted by early childhood teachers themselves who, when asked to define an early childhood education professional, cited – among others – the attributes of being highly paid, being competent and respectable, as well as having respectability (Dalli, 2008).

Although this view of professionalism helps to address the low pay and status of early childhood education teachers (Moss, 2010), the hierarchical aspect of this definition would be problematic for many early childhood teachers who do not view themselves as elitist. Instead they see themselves as part of a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 2002) in which professional teachers strive to work in partnership with parents and co-construct learning with children (Rinaldi, 2006). Additionally, this traditional view of professionalism has also been criticised as deriving from a view of professionals as being largely male and middle class,

and so does not reflect the mainly female workforce of early childhood education (Dall'alba, 2009). As this traditional view of professionalism is only partly applicable to the professional early childhood teacher, it would seem that another way is required to describe professionalism in early childhood (Dalli, 2006, 2008).

Standards-based view of professionalism

Although many in the community (parents, sports coaches, community leaders) teach children, only those who are qualified and registered as teachers can be termed 'professional teachers' (Hall, 2008). Hence a standards-based view of professionalism foregrounds the achieving of a qualification and abiding by professional codes of ethics. For e.c. teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Teachers Council (2007) sets a standard for graduates and the sector has two codes of ethics to provide guidance (NZEI Te Riu Roa Early Childhood Code of Ethics National Working Group, 1995). These standards have had a strong influence on shaping early childhood teachers' views of professionalism as they form the basis of the teacher registration process that each teacher is required to meet. To emphasise standards and an ethical code as a basis for professionalism is justified as a means to normalise a higher standard of practice for those teaching children under the age of five years old. Many young children now spend as long as 50 hours a week in early childhood centres, many of which are privately owned businesses where children are the profit making commodity (May & Mitchell, 2009; Scherer, 2009). Few would argue with the fact that society has a responsibility to protect these young children, so to enforce a prescribed standard of practice for teachers is not only desirable, but necessary.

There is, however, criticism of the standards-based view of professionalism as it is considered that a naïve acceptance of the certainty and objectivity that such standards purport to achieve serves to transform early childhood teachers into technicians who merely produce pre-determined outcomes, regardless of culture and content (Moss, 2010). Thus a simplistic emphasis on standards can reduce professionalism to a superficial recipe that shapes all teachers to the same mould irrespective of the context, and in doing so, diminishes the opportunity for teachers to form their own professional identity, both individually and as a group. It is misleading to believe that professionalism requires nothing more than uncritically meeting these externally prescribed standards.

Once again, although there is some merit in the standards-based view of professionalism, it is a one-dimensional view of early childhood teachers' work. This again demonstrates a need for a more multi-faceted view of what constitutes professionalism in early childhood education.

An alternative view of professionalism

The work that early childhood education teachers perform is unique, complex and highly relational involving a strong emotional component that necessitates forming strong connections with children and their families, as well as colleagues (Dalli & Cherrington, 2009). In order to build and maintain these relationships, early childhood teachers cannot position themselves hierarchically as experts educating the non-expert children and families, but must assume an attitude of "a person who proposes, lets his/her skill as an educator and a person circulate through the system and compares it with the knowledge of the parents" (Rinaldi, 2006, p.38). This is teaching practice based on relationships. The importance of the emotional component of the professional work that early childhood teachers do is understated by the two views of professionalism described above (Osgood, 2006). Because interactions are integral to teaching young children, it is not appropriate to see teaching as solely an individual task that can be completed in isolation, but more as a facilitator of a complicated set of interconnected relationships. As a result, because what is usually being taught derives from the relationships and the children's interests, rather than being driven by a prescribed curriculum, the curriculum and teaching in early childhood education is in a continual state of flux.

In addition, the rapidly changing nature of society, and associated shifting emphasis of government policy, means that a fixed, certain view of professionalism is no longer appropriate, so professionalism must be viewed as something fluid and constantly evolving. Moreover it has been suggested that professional practice, and the notion of professionalism, must be viewed as both personal and cultural, in other words as: "relative to individuals and how they act and think and also relative to society, to groups and circles in which each individual operates" (Ruė, 2006, p.131). To reflect this complexity, an alternative view of professionalism is needed.

The contemporary debate about professionalism is resonant of the debate that took place in the late 1980s and 1990s in early childhood education about the slippery notion of 'quality'. At that time, those involved in early childhood education rejected the 'one size fits all' conception of quality as being limited and unhelpful. This debate led to new ways of articulating and approaching the concept of quality. Aware of the multiple perspectives of quality, Katz (1994) suggested that quality in early childhood education needed to be examined from five main perspectives: the 'top-down' perspective (according to the licensing regulations), the 'bottom-up' perspective (what the child actually experiences), the 'outside-in' perspective (what families experience), the 'inside' perspective (what teaching staff experience) and the 'ultimate' perspective (how community and society at large are served by the early childhood service). Katz believed that each of these perspectives was an important contribution to an assessment of quality.

The five perspectives outlined above can be adapted to form a useful framework for analysing the complexity of professionalism in early childhood education. The 'top-down' perspective relates to the externally formed criteria, such as the Graduating Teachers Standards (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007), that creates a standard of teaching practice. The 'bottom-up' perspective can be used to assess the professional relationships teachers build with children and their families with whom they interact on a daily basis. The 'outside-in' perspective

Knowledges grew through dialogue and shared purpose.
Photo courtesy of New Zealand Playcentre Federation. Photographer: Jo Carter

refers to the professional roles that teachers perform within the communities they serve, such as mentoring student teachers, or advocating for children's rights throughout the community, and the ways the values of each community are reflected in the practices within the early childhood centre. The 'ultimate' perspective is the view that society has of early childhood teachers, which is shaped by the changing political policies, and is underpinned by society's values and beliefs. Finally the 'inside-out' perspective denotes the way that early childhood teachers construct their own identities as professionals by reflecting on and articulating their professional practice.

Discussion

Adopting a multi-perspective approach to professionalism enables the complexity of the role to be easily examined and discussed. Nevertheless, the approach could be critiqued as fracturing the professional role of the teacher into disconnected segments. For this reason, the 'inside-out' perspective is crucial as it is this perspective that brings all the others together and allows each teacher to reflect in a meaningful way on the various aspects of their professional role. This requires an alternative view of professionalism – that is, the professionalism needed by each teacher to have the courage to review each aspect of their own teaching practice and to reflect on the way this can impact on children's learning within the context that they teach.

The 'inside-out' professional takes a questioning approach to teaching that emphasises critical reflection and dialogue based on authentic situations pertaining to each teacher's immediate teaching context. This 'inside-out' view of professionalism recognises that there can no longer be a fixed certain view of professionalism, but that professionalism stems from wise practice that combines expert knowledge with sound judgement and thoughtful action (Goodfellow, 2003) so the importance

of care, relationships and wisdom is emphasised (Dalli & Cherrington, 2009). It is the 'inside-out' perspective that integrates all the other perspectives and gives integrity to teaching practice, and it is this integrity that signifies professionalism.

Therefore the alternative view of professionalism accepts the contested nature of professionalism as one that must always incorporate critical reflection, discussion and debate. In this way, professionalism in early childhood education is more than a set of attributes, or a set of standards, but is always in the process of being socially constructed – an open-ended on-going discussion that is constantly changing and evolving. Hence an important aspect of inside-out professionalism would be that each teacher scrutinises their own practice to identify, for example, if and how this may marginalise or discriminate against children and families.

By participating in professional dialogue about teaching, peers or colleagues could then engage in professional dialogue, so that a rigorous critical attitude to teaching is developed to form an 'inside-out' standard of practice. Using the framework outlined above, teachers can construct their own professional identity, as well as build a strong early childhood community of professional practice. The knowledge created would be context-specific and relative to each individual and group, rather than fixed and certain (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005).

The aim of such discussions would not be to form a final view of professionalism, but to scrutinise the values underpinning practice, while creating an awareness of how reflecting on practice can lead to the construction of new knowledge as well as enabling a shared understanding of what it is to be a professional early childhood teacher. Using a framework that highlights the relational aspect of early childhood teaching, would strengthen collaboration between individual teachers, colleagues, children and their families, and the community, so that e.c. teachers would be regarded

as professionals who develop within reciprocal relationships (Urban, 2008).

The strength of this approach is that teachers themselves form the basis of their own professional identity and hold themselves accountable for their practice. In this way teachers would exercise their own agency to create the professional autonomy regarded as one of the attributes of a traditional profession.

This alternative view of professionalism will never give early childhood teachers the cognitive security offered by a fixed one-dimensional view of professionalism. However, its complexity reflects a more authentic view of the profession of early childhood teachers, and should gain respect from those outside the profession.

References

Dahlberg, G., & Moss, P. (2005). *Ethics and politics in early childhood education*. London, UK: RoutledgeFalmer.

Dall'alba, G. (2009). *Learning to be professional: Innovation and change in professional education.* Berlin, Germany: Springer.

Dalli, C. (2006). Redefining professionalism in early childhood practice: A ground-up approach. *Early Childhood Folio, 10,* 6-11.

Dalli, C. (2008). Pedagogy, knowledge and collaboration: Towards a ground-up perspective on professionalism. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16*(2), 171-185.

Dalli, C., & Cherrington, S. (2009). Ethical practice as relational work: A new frontier for professional learning? In S. Edwards & J. Nuttall (Eds.), *Professional learning in early childhood settings* (pp.61-80). Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense.

Goodfellow, J (2003). Practical wisdom in professional practice: The person in the practice. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 4*(1), 48-62.

Hall, A. (2008). Professional responsibility and teacher ethics. In C. McGee & D. Fraser (Eds.), *The professional practice of teaching* (3rd ed.). South Melbourne, VIC, Australia: Cengage.

Ingersoll, R. M., & Perda, D. (2008). The status of teaching as a profession. In J. H. Ballantine & J. Z. Spade (Eds.), *Schools and society: A sociological approach to education* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Katz, L. (1994, November). Perspectives on the quality of early childhood programs. *Phi Delta Kappan 76*(3), 200-205.

Katz, L. (1985). *Talks with teachers of young children: A collection.* Norwood, NJ: Ablex.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (2002). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Marsh, C. (2008). *Becoming a teacher: Knowledge, skills and issues* (4th ed.). Frenchs Forest, NSW, Australia: Pearson Education Australia.

May, H., & Mitchell, L. (2009). *Strengthening community-based early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand.* Wellington: NZEI - Te Riu Roa.

Miller, L., Dalli, C., & Urban, M. (Eds.). (2012). *Early childhood grows up: Towards a critical ecology of the profession.* Berlin, Germany: Springer Verlag.

Moss, J. (2013). Introducing teaching as a profession. In R. Churchill, P. Ferguson, S. Godinho, N. F. Johnson, A. Keddie, W. Letts, J. Mackay, M. McGill, J. Moss, M. C. Nagel, P. Nicolson & M. Vick (Eds.), *Teaching: Making a difference* (pp. 2-33). Milton, QLD, Australia: John Wiley & Sons.

Moss, P. (2010). We cannot continue as we are: the educator in an education for survival. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 11*(1), 8-19.

NZEI Te Riu Roa Early Childhood Code of Ethics National Working Group (1995). *Early childhood code of ethics for Aotearoa New Zealand.* Wellington: NZEI.

New Zealand Teachers Council (2007). *Graduating Teacher Standards: Aotearoa New Zealand.* Retrieved from www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz

New Zealand Teachers Council. (2004). *Code of Ethics for Teachers.* Retrieved from http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/required/ethics/codeofethics.stm

Nurse, A. D. (2007). Introduction: Dilemmas and debates. In A. D. Nurse (Ed.), *The new early years professional: Dilemmas and debates.* New York: Routledge.

Osgood, J. (2006). Deconstructing professionalism in early childhood education: resisting the regulatory gaze. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood, 7*(1), 5-14.

Rinaldi, C. (2006). *In dialogue with Reggio Emilia: Listening, researching, and learning.* London, UK: Routledge.

Rué, J. (2006). Reconstructing teaching professionalism in the new modernity: An agenda for new action narratives. *Educational Action Research, 14*(1), 119-138.

Scherer, K. (2009, April 24). Little people, big money. *New Zealand Herald,* pp. 12-15.

Urban, M. (2008). Dealing with uncertainty: Challenges and possibilities for the early childhood profession. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16*(2), 135-152.

Professionalism in practice

Teachers thinking together about teaching

Sue Cherrington

Abstract

Teachers thinking about and reflecting on their practice is widely recognised as an integral aspect of teacher effectiveness and ongoing professional learning. New Zealand early childhood practitioners have identified that engaging in reflection is an important professional behaviour (Dalli, 2008) and being reflective is included in the requirements set for teachers by the New Zealand Teachers Council (2007; 2011). This article explores how teachers in three early childhood centres engaged in thinking and reflecting about their practices, individually and collectively. Video-recorded episodes of their teaching interactions with children were used to prompt teachers' reflection and are drawn on in this article to illustrate how (i) the collective reflections of the teaching team influenced individual teachers' thinking and reflection; and (ii) teachers found the video-recorded episodes useful as a tool for promoting professional reflection.

Introduction

Reflective practice has long been considered an essential aspect of effective teaching and ongoing teacher learning and improvement. The notion of teachers as reflective practitioners permeates the discourse of teachers and professional documents (e.g., New Zealand Teachers Council Registered Teacher Criteria, 2012) whilst research into reflective practice in teaching is widespread (e.g., Mena Marcos & Tillema, 2006). Mena Marcos, Miguel and Tillema (2009) argue that whilst multiple definitions of reflective practice exist, the "central idea in research literature is that through reflection the teacher better understands and extends his/her professional activity, and that reflecting on teaching problems will lead to new insights for practice" (p. 191). Zeichner and Liston (1996) go deeper, suggesting that that reflective practice entails "the critical examination of experiences, knowledge and values, an understanding of the consequences of one's teaching, the ability to provide heartfelt justification for one's beliefs and actions and a commitment to equality and respect for difference" (p. 48).

Whilst most research into reflective practice in teaching has been undertaken within the schooling sector or in pre-service teacher education, reflection as a professional practice within early childhood teaching has also been investigated. In Britain, the *Study of pedagogical effectiveness in early learning* project (Moyles, Adams & Musgrove, 2002) sought to understand effective pedagogical practices for working with 3- to 5-year-old children by investigating practitioners' thinking and practices. Their findings contributed to the development of a *Framework of effective pedagogy* comprising practice, principles, and professional dimensions. Within the professional dimension, the importance of reflection is addressed through several key statements.

Here in New Zealand, early childhood practitioners have also identified that being reflective is an indicator of professionalism. In a survey sent to almost 600 ECE services in 2006, early childhood practitioners identified reflective practice as an indicator of how they would recognise professionalism in a colleague (Dalli, 2008). Dalli notes that respondents who identified reflective practice "without exception emphasised the ability 'to observe, analyse and critically evaluate one's professional practice'" (p. 180).

Reference to reflective practice is also included in a number of professional documents. For example, the New Zealand Teachers Council's requirements for teachers (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2007; 2009) highlight the importance of teachers drawing on evidence and wider literature in order to reflect on and refine their practice. Resources such as *Te whāriki, Quality in action*, and *Kei tua o te pae* (Ministry of Education, 1996; 1998; 2004 / 2007 / 2009) include reflective questions whilst the self-review guidelines, *Ngā arohaehae whai hua* (Ministry of Education, 2006), focus on reflection as part of the self-review process.

Despite the widespread attention given to reflective practice in the research and professional literature, Mena Marcos, Miguel and Tillema's (2009) analysis of international literature suggests that being able to articulate and reflect upon practice is challenging for teachers. Such challenges are likely to exist for New Zealand early childhood teachers as well. Drawing on my doctoral research (Cherrington, 2011), this article discusses how teachers in three New Zealand early childhood education (ECE) centres engaged in thinking about and reflecting on their interactions with children, both individually and collectively. In highlighting influences on these teachers' reflections, this article is intended to draw

attention to practices that support professional reflection.

Research method

For my doctoral research, I undertook case studies of teaching teams in three early childhood services[1]:

1. **Moana Early Learning Centre** (ELC) - a community-based, semi-rural centre that offered 6-hour sessions to children aged from 2 – 5-years

   The teachers: Rachel, the head teacher, and Jane were both full-time teachers whilst Inez and Meg job-shared a third position.

2. **Summer Kindergarten**: a public kindergarten that offered five 3-hour morning sessions and three 2½ hour afternoon sessions.

   The teachers: Marilyn, Poppy and Diana all worked full-time.

3. **Ngā Rangatahi Tamariki** ELC - a community-based centre catering predominately for children aged under two years old. The centre was organised into three smaller groups comprising immobile infants, mobile infants and toddlers up to about 18 months, and older children aged from about 18 months to four years.

   The teachers: Bernice, Alexis and Paige taught the youngest infants. Spring, Summer, Autumn and Storm taught the mobile infants and toddlers, and Juanita, Anastasia, Conrad, Paige and Giselle taught the older group of children.

Each team participated in group stimulated-recall interviews where video-recorded episodes of their teaching were shown. The teacher at the centre of each episode was asked to recall what they had been thinking about during the episode and was able to stop the DVD at any stage in order to share their thinking. Other teachers were asked to refrain from commenting until the end of the episode at which point teachers engaged in discussion and collective reflection about the episode. Group, rather than individual, interviews were chosen to reflect the New Zealand ECE context where teachers almost always teach in teams. The teachers and I also kept reflective journals and I kept detailed field notes and attended and recorded team planning meetings.

Modes of reflection

When these teachers watched and discussed video-recorded episodes of their teaching, there was a rich, complex tapestry of reflection and thinking in which *reflection-in-action*, *reflection-on-action* (Schön, 1983, 1987) and *interactive thinking* (Marland & Osborne, 1990) were interwoven. Reflection-in-action occurs within the moment of the activity, often in response to the unexpected, and results in an immediate change in practice. In contrast, reflection-on-action generally takes place after the event and does not influence or impact on the original episode. Marland and Osborne (1990) suggest that interactive

1 Centre and teacher names are pseudonyms selected by the teachers.

thinking occurs during teaching interactions when teachers are considering how best to relate to and respond to children in a highly individualised manner, drawing on their existing knowledge of the children.

In the following example, Rachel shares her thinking about an episode involving three children, Jacob, Alistair and Edward, whilst they are playing with model dinosaurs in a water trough filled with bark shavings. The episode begins with Rachel and Jacob:

And I think it's… instead of being the teacher here and doing a "what dinosaurs are all about" and trying to extend there, it was just about play, just about playing with him and relaxing… He just wants adult company here…the closeness…and we really are just going in and out of those wood piles in there that have been set up. There we go … and Alastair is here. Thinking "Here we go, the interactions might start here" – awareness of Edward coming in … See Edward's coming in with another agenda in here – it's fire and quite a power, powerful statement. I'm not sure where he wants to take that, again…Just trying to get some language in there with Edward as well, extend that language a little bit, getting a little bit more contact … but really Jacob really [is] wanting my company and pulling back – getting quite cross with me and saying "I just want to play."

Rachel's descriptive in-the-moment style and the inclusion of substantial background detail provided the context for the other teachers to understand more fully what was happening in the episode. Her description also reveals that in the moment of teaching, Rachel had specific learning intentions, responded to the children's cues and chose her interactive strategies to match the children in ways that reflect Marland and Osborne's (1990) construct of interactive teaching. This situation did not, however, contain the required element of surprise to produce reflection-in-action as Schön (1983) described.

In contrast, Diana's description of a situation where she realised that she was responding to one child, Pieta, differently to how she responded to other children did involve reflection-in-action:

I'm just reminding Pieta to use my name, "teacher". It was funny… and this was an interesting point, and I did notice this morning, 'cause Pieta always comes and says "teacher", and he's got quite a big voice, and he'll come and go, and he's very… demanding with it, you know, "teacher, teacher"; and so quite often, 'cause I've noticed that you guys remind him what your name is; but then I noticed that there was some other kids that do it as well, and I thought, "oh, I haven't been reminding them what my name is". But they have quite quieter voices, and they're not as insistent, and they'll come up quietly and go, "oh, teacher, teacher". And I thought, is it because he does that really insistently, so then I had to think about, mmm, maybe I need to modify my approach, and make sure I'm being fair about this, and reminding everybody.

These teachers moved seamlessly between the three modes of interactive thinking, reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Describing their thinking and reflections during the episode seemed to provoke reflection-on-action, often

in the following sentence. These moves often resulted in teachers sharing their wider, collective knowledge and a shift from talking about the specific episode to what Horn and Little (2010) describe as principled talk. An example of this occurred during the Summer Kindergarten teachers' discussion about Margaret's (a three-year old in the afternoon session) attempts to join a group of children when it evolved into a broader conversation where principles that underpinned their kindergarten practices were articulated. The ways in which the teachers in each centre constantly wove between these three modes of thinking and reflection epitomised the fluidity of their thinking, particularly within the context of their community of practice.

Teaching teams as communities of practice: Influencing teachers thinking and reflection

During the study I became increasingly interested in how each teaching team influenced the teachers' thinking and reflection about their interactions with children, and drew on Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of a *community of practice* to explore this. Wenger (1998) argues that learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon that occurs when we participate in the practices of social communities (such as the workplace, a club, or a classroom). A core concept of Wenger's social learning theory is that individuals negotiate meaning about their experiences within a community of practice through their *participation* in the community and through the processes and artefacts, or *reification*, which the community uses to illuminate and develop shared understandings of their practices.

My analysis revealed that teachers in each centre collectively negotiated meaning about their individual and shared experiences and, thus, the community influenced the thinking and reflection of individual members about their practices. Teachers engaged in negotiating meaning in three main ways: trying to understand what was happening in the episode (what was going on), making sense of what they had viewed (what might this mean), and critiquing practice (reinforcing or criticising practices, offering alternatives).

To illustrate: the Summer Kindergarten teachers sought to understand and make sense of the episodes by asking clarifying questions and sharing their ideas and opinions. These teachers offered new ideas frequently, resulting in lengthy, wide-ranging discussions. As a newly formed team (one of the three teachers, Diana, had joined the team several weeks before I began my data collection in the kindergarten), the ways in which these teachers negotiated meaning about their thinking and practices reflected their newly developing community of practice. Whilst the interviews provided a catalyst for discussion, revealing philosophical aspects not previously aired, these teachers seldom criticised what they observed. Rather they offered new ideas to deepen the discussions or reinforced each other in a process of reification of practice within the new team.

Wenger (1998) suggests that learning is a characteristic of practice and that communities can be a site for both the *acquisition* of knowledge and for the *creation* of knowledge

as a result of constant fine-tuning between participants' experiences and their competence. In each teaching team there was evidence of how viewing and discussing the episodes together led to new insights about their own practices, programme routines and activities, and their understandings of children. The combination of three factors was important here: first, the visual record of the episode that enabled participation, whether teachers had been part of the episode or not; second, the opportunity to hear others' perspectives on the situation, from an insider (focus teacher) and outsider (other members of the team who had not been part of the situation) stance; and third, being able to collaboratively reflect-on-action without the pressure to respond to children in the moment of the interaction.

Across all the centres, teachers acquired new knowledge but they also created new knowledge as their understandings and practices were mediated through the process of articulating and discussing their interactive thinking (Marland & Osborne, 1990) and their reflection-in- and -on-action (Schön, 1983, 1987). The acquisition of new knowledge about practice was particularly evident with the less experienced Ngā Rangatahi Tamariki ELC teachers. For example, in one interview, Spring explicitly offered advice to Autumn about alternative strategies to engage children's interest and then commented in the second interview on the changes she observed in Autumn's practices.

The Ngā Rangatahi Tamariki team's interactions also illustrate Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of *legitimate peripheral participation* where newcomers are inducted into the community of practice through a gradual process of increasing participation, guided by the more experienced. Senior staff, or old-timers, tended to offer more analytical accounts and engaged more fully in collective reflective discussions than did newcomers, or the less experienced, less qualified staff. Team leaders were particularly instrumental in giving feedback and offering advice to the newcomers in a direct manner. In addition, team leaders demonstrated self-critique, modelling reflection-on-action to their less experienced colleagues.

Patterns of talk

Research into professional learning communities has found that teachers' patterns of talk influence how effectively their discussions address issues of practice. Horn and Little (2010) found that teachers' talk can effectively serve to turn their attention towards, or away from, teaching. In my study I found that at times teachers' attempts to support and empathise with their colleagues over challenging instances turned attention away from important issues that underlay the situation. For example, Rachel talked about her excitement when working with children on a new computer programme, and her frustration when the episode was interrupted by the morning tea routine:

And I think I said "I don't want to go because it's too exciting" (laughter)…and I think that's OK, that's honest, because it was. I almost thought, "I'm going to get told off by somebody in a minute". … But… when I walked away from there I thought, "Oh, this is what the kids feel like all the time, we've stopped

them in the middle of their play".

Inez:

But they can come back to it.

Meg:

But it can be saved.

Rachel:

But it was such a new thing at that particular moment and it was such a precious moment. We were having too much fun, together…

The reassurance offered by both Inez and Meg, whilst supportive, had the effect of turning the conversation away from the issue of interrupting children's engagement in their play. In contrast, conversations where attention was turned towards teaching led more frequently to discussions that shifted from specific instances to more general principled talk (Horn & Little, 2010) such as when the Summer Kindergarten teachers engaged in a sustained conversation about the purposes of assessment. Such discussions created opportunities for deeper reflection, drawing on the team's joint knowledge.

Teachers' style of talk has also been found to influence the extent to which members of a professional learning community can engage in meaningful discussion about their practices. Talk that is '*rough draft*' (Horn & Little, 2010) or '*exploratory*' (Crespo, 2006) has high levels of involvement by group members. It is characterised by tentativeness and a 'thinking out loud' style, allowing for disagreement between members (Crespo, 2006). In contrast, *expository* or *final draft* talk is often framed in the past tense, does not involve other members of the group, and does not involve explicit disagreements.

In this study, teachers engaged in rough draft or exploratory speech as they recalled their interactive thinking and reflection-in-action at the time and collectively reflected-on-action. The extracts from the data above illustrate how teachers often made a 'false start' to a sentence or shifted direction in their thinking. Teachers often used idiosyncrasies such as 'you know' and 'sort of' which seemed to act as fillers, creating space for further thinking[2]. Such speech patterns provided openings for other teachers to contribute their perspectives and for collective dialogues to develop.

Video as a tool for professional reflection

Watching the video-recorded episodes together enabled teachers to identify aspects that were unseen or unrecognised during the actual episode. For example, when watching the lunchtime routine, the teachers in the Ngā Rangatahi Tamariki ELC toddler team were surprised to note that children's behaviour was much more settled and appropriate than they recalled it being during the actual routine.

Watching the video also offered new insights into children's actions, particularly for part-time teachers and for the Summer Kindergarten team whose teacher: child ratios meant they often did not see episodes that had occurred elsewhere in the centre environment. The use of video-recordings of teachers' interactions with children has, therefore, potential to assist teachers to articulate their thinking and reflections and to develop shared understandings of practice.

Teachers in each centre indicated they found the stimulated-recall process a powerful form of professional development, as it created opportunities for shared dialogue, gave them a broader view of what was happening in the centre, and enabled them to focus on aspects not visible to them during the busyness of their teaching. Poppy's reflective journal reveals how watching herself on video supported her professional reflection:

Watching myself on tape has made me more aware of, more conscious of, my interactions with children off tape. In the 'busyness' of the day, at times you just do what you can, but it seems I am far more aware of 'short-changing' a child. (It still happens – only I register it more).

In some ways, it has focused my mind to 'what would I think of this on camera – am I doing the best that I can?'

I have become more aware of my strategies too. I am doing the same things I have always done, but am more conscious of the decisions I take, and why. I am finding that I try to have a 'child's eye view' of things a bit more. The camera is like a different eye, and it captures things I don't. I am trying to be more aware of children on the periphery, those that are trying to contribute, or are interested, but don't have the confidence to be overt in their intentions. Some I expect to find there – but some I don't.

Implications for professional reflection

The influence of the community of practice on teachers' thinking and reflection was clear in this study, and thus provides a mechanism for supporting teachers to engage in collective professional reflection about their practices. To do so effectively, however, communities of practice require structural support such as time and spaces for regular, on-going meetings and internal processes that build trust (Stoll, Bolam, McMahon, Wallace & Thomas, 2006) and which turn conversations towards teaching (Horn & Little, 2010) and critique of practice (Timperley & Earl, 2008).

As evidenced by the centres in this study, many New Zealand EC services are already operating as – or have the internal capacity to develop themselves as – communities of practice. However, previous New Zealand research has found that many services struggle to find sufficient time for teachers to meet regularly to discuss issues of teaching and learning (Aitken, 2005; Hedges, 2007; Nuttall, 2004). Resourcing regular opportunities for teachers to engage in collaborative dialogue is important for the on-going professional reflection and critique of practices essential for supporting children's learning. This is reinforced by data from a recent Education

---

2 **These were replaced in the transcripts by '…' to make them easier to read.**

Review Office (2010) report suggesting that many EC services lack the leadership and culture of reflective practice and professional learning needed to develop an effective community of practice. Supporting such services is likely to require significant professional development in order to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudinal aspects necessary for effective engagement in reflective dialogues with colleagues.

Acknowledgements

References

Aitken, H. (2005). *Participating in an early childhood community of practice: The experiences of a group of newly qualified teachers* (Unpublished MEd thesis), University of Waikato, Hamilton.

Cherrington, S.A., (2011). *Early childhood teachers' thinking and reflecting within communities of learners.* (Unpublished PhD thesis). Victoria University of Wellington: Wellington.

Crespo, S. (2006). Elementary teacher talk in mathematics study groups. *Educational Studies in Mathematics, 63*(1), 29–56.

Dalli, C. (2008). Pedagogy, knowledge and collaboration: Towards a ground-up perspective on professionalism. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 16*(2), 171 - 185.

Education Review Office. (2009). *Implementing self review in early childhood services.* Retrieved 6/04/2011 from http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/(category)/Early%20Childhood/(categoryId)/1

Hedges, H. (2007). *Funds of knowledge in early childhood communities of inquiry.* (Unpublished PhD thesis). Massey University, Palmerston North.

Horn, I., & Little, J. (2010). Attending to problems of practice: Routines and resources for professional learning in teachers' workplace interactions. *American Educational Research Journal, 47*(1), 181–217.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marland, P., & Osborne, B. (1990). Classroom theory, thinking, and action. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 6*(1), 93-109.

Mena Marcos, J., Miguel, E. S., & Tillema, H. (2009). Teacher reflection on action: What is said (in research) and what is done (in teaching). *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 10*(2), 191-204.

Mena Marcos, J., & Tillema, H. (2006). Studying studies on teacher reflection and action: An appraisal of research contributions. *Educational Research Review, 1*, 112-132.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te whāriki : He whāriki matauranga o ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1998). *Quality in action: Te mahi whai hua: Implementing the Revised Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices in New Zealand early childhood services.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2004/2007/2009). *Kei tua o te pae: Assessment for learning: Early childhood exemplars.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2006). *Ngā arohaehae whai hua: Self-review guidelines for early childhood education.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Moyles, J., Adams, S., & Musgrove, A. (2002). *Study of pedagogical effectiveness in early learning.* London, UK: Department for Education and Skills.

New Zealand Teachers Council. Registered Teacher Criteria (2009). Retrieved 5 June 2012 from: http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/rtc/rtc.stm#h2.

New Zealand Teachers Council. (2007). Graduating Teacher Standards Retrieved 5 June 2012 from: http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz/te/gts/index.stm.

Nuttall, J. (2004). *Why don't you ask someone who cares? Teacher identity, intersubjectivity, and curriculum negotiation in a New Zealand childcare centre.* (Unpublished PhD thesis). Victoria University of Wellington, Wellington.

Schön, D. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action.* New York: Basic Books.

Schön, D. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner: Towards new design for teaching and learning in the professions.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M., & Thomas, S. (2006). Professional learning communities: A review of the literature. *Journal of Educational Change, 7,* 221–258.

Timperley, H., & Earl, L. (2008). Using conversations to make sense of evidence: Possibilities and pitfalls. In L. Earl & H. Timperley (Eds.), *Professional learning conversations: Challenges in using evidence for improvement* (pp. 121 - 126). Dordretch, The Netherlands: Springer.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Zeichner, K., & Liston, D. (1996). *Reflective teaching: An introduction.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Playcentre as a professional system

Quality education through working as a collective

Maureen Woodhams and Suzanne Manning

Abstract

In recent years early childhood education (ECE) policy trends have led to an increasing requirement for providers to act professionally. However, a traditional conception of the professional, as an autonomous knowledgeable expert maintaining optimal distance from clients, may not be suited to the 'messy' nature of ECE, and discussion continues on how professionalism can be reconceptualised to reflect the reality of early education experience. Further, while a professional workforce is widely seen as central to high quality in teacher-led services, Playcentres provide high quality education for children while involving moderately-trained non-professional parents as educators.

Mathias Urban (2010) proposes alternative possibilities for professional systems in ECE, based on reciprocal relationships between the various actors in the system, dialogue and critical inquiry, and a focus on questions of meaning, value and purpose. This article examines how Playcentre practice and theory provides a 'professional' level experience for children through the lens of Urban's suggested cornerstones of professional practice. Within Playcentre, professional knowledge is held by the group, including trained and untrained parents-as-educators and Playcentre Association mentors, and strong democratic practices, including participation of all parents-as-educators to some degree. When combined with the practice of emergent leadership, these ensure a strong climate of critical inquiry and purpose.

Professionalism in Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education has become increasingly important in public discourse in the last two decades. Since the late 1980s there has been significant policy interest in ECE, focussing on increasing provision and improving 'quality'. The emphasis on 'quality' has been supported through a burgeoning ECE research sector which has shown, amongst other things, that high quality formal learning environments for young children can lead to valuable later education outcomes (e.g. Wylie, Thompson & Kerslake-Hendricks, 1996) and that poor quality services can do harm to young children (e.g. Mitchell, Wylie & Carr, 2008). Although the notion of 'quality' in ECE is problematic and much debated, there has been a consensus that a 'quality' workforce is pivotal in achieving the desired outcomes. As a result, attention has been paid to professionalising the ECE workforce, including improving teaching qualifications, defining professional standards and introducing a code of ethics (Dalli, 2008). However, it is not clear what is meant by a 'professional workforce' and specifically what this means in ECE settings.

The traditional definition of a profession has the individual at its centre, through focusing on how professional knowledge is acquired and used by this person (Dalli, 2008; Urban, 2010). A profession therefore requires an effective means of producing approved knowledge, a means of accrediting professionals who are qualified to use this knowledge, and a way of ensuring that individuals maintain a high quality of practice. According to this model, if an ECE service employs such a professional, then quality education will be assured.

Unfortunately this traditional model of professionalism tends to break down in today's 'messy' and uncertain ECE situations. For example, Dalli (2006) has critiqued the traditional concept of 'professional distance' – maintaining an ideal objectivity from the work situation – and argued that instead educators should have warm, even loving, relationships with the young children they teach. Further, Urban (2010) and others have questioned the ability of practitioners to be able to act professionally in a regulatory and policy environment that emphasises an instrumental approach to teaching, and where the equation is supposed to be that: practice based on research evidence will guarantee pre-determined desired outcomes. This creates what he refers to as the 'practitioner's dilemma', where educators are required to maintain a "relational, reciprocal, open and inevitably uncertain professionalism" and "act professionally - within a professional system that is largely *unprofessional*, considering the key requirements of the field" (pp. 14/15, emphasis in the original).

The link between a professional identity and quality ECE also breaks down with the case of Playcentre, where high quality education is produced by volunteer parents with a wide range of qualifications both in terms of field and expertise levels (Education Review Office, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2006; Wylie, Thompson & Kerslake-Hendricks, 1996). In this case, how can quality education be assured if professionals are not employed? Dalli's (2008) exploration

of professionalism touches on this anomaly by noting that the achievements of parent-led services, including Playcentre and Kōhanga Reo, cannot be accounted for by the 'professional practitioner = quality' equation.

We agree with current writers (e.g. Dalli, 2008; Urban, 2010) that a new model of professionalism is needed for today's ECE context. For our purposes of addressing the 'practitioner's dilemma' as well as accounting for the Playcentre experience, Urban's (2010) framework seems to offer a way forward by shifting the emphasis from the individual professional to *professional systems* and interrogating what counts as professional knowledge and where it is produced. In this theoretical paper, we will summarise relevant features of Playcentre as a family-oriented ECE service, and then apply Urban's framework to the context of Playcentre as a professional system.

Playcentre in the early childhood context

Playcentres are ECE centres where the education sessions and management are provided by groups of parents working together in a co-operative structure. Playcentres are founded on the philosophy that parents are their child's first teacher, and that everyone in the learning community – from the newest member to the most experienced – has something valuable to contribute (New Zealand Playcentre Federation, 2011). The structure of the Playcentre Federation and Associations provides curriculum, environmental and support frameworks which enable high quality education to be delivered by the part-time and volunteer parents of children attending local centres (Mitchell et al., 2006; Woodhams, 2012). This includes practices based on Playcentre philosophy, a system of support workers who visit individual centres, and access to an adult education programme which has been designed specifically for working in this context.

The large majority of Playcentres are licensed by the Ministry of Education and must follow similar requirements to teacher-led licensed ECE centres. These include meeting ECE regulations and criteria, building, health and safety standards, Education Review Office audits and implementation of a programme following *Te whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996). The qualifications requirements within the Playcentre licensing agreement involve combinations of courses from the Playcentre Diploma, rather than a generic ECE teaching diploma (Ministry of Education, 2001). The Playcentre Diploma is designed so that each course focuses on early childhood pedagogy and management, cultural awareness, as well as mentoring and working with other adults in a cooperative setting.

A major feature of Playcentre is the creation of a community of learners (Gibbons, 2005; Te One et al., 2007; van Wijk et al., 2007), as it is recognised that being in a parent cooperative means that people will be taking on roles that they are unfamiliar with. This involves both formal and informal learning. There is no distinction between parents,

staff and management – the parents of children attending a Playcentre take on all these roles and wear several hats simultaneously, including 'learner' and 'teacher'; in effect, the Māori concept of *ako* in practice (see Pere, 1997). Further, as all member parents are part of the management committee this structure also leads to a highly democratic organisation, where control rests predominantly with the 'current' families, supported by experienced people.

The emphasis on shared knowledge is reinforced through the practice of emergent leadership (Manning, Woodhams & Howsan, 2011). Leadership is distributed amongst the group so that responsibility is shared, and specific leadership roles are rotated on a regular basis. This means that people with different perspectives take on a position and bring a new style and energy to the role. It also means that people are continually requiring support to learn new roles and mistakes must be tolerated by the wider group in the interests of learning. Emergent leadership requires a respect of other people, their knowledges, and their contribution within a community of learners. These features are key components of a professional system as envisioned by Urban (2010), which will now be outlined.

Professional Systems

In his article titled *Dealing with uncertainty: Challenges and possibilities for the early childhood profession*, Urban (2010) critiques the prevailing view of professionalism for being reliant on knowledge produced in a hierarchical manner. That is, where knowledge is seen as 'given' to practitioners who have been 'trained' to 'apply' this knowledge to solve problems to produce pre-determined outcomes. He argues that this is contradictory to the relational and uncertain nature of ECE, and constructs a practitioner who is more of a technician than an autonomous professional.

Instead Urban proposes that the whole professional system needs to be re-thought, and this extends beyond individuals to teacher educators, policy makers and support organisations. Knowledge, in his view, should be seen as being produced through the "activity of making sense of uncertain situations" and taking place "with the practitioner being part of the situation herself" (p. 13). Co-construction of knowledge in pedagogical interactions with children is something that has become well accepted in ECE, but this activity of making sense is also affected by the wider social, historical and political context we find ourselves in. Uncertainty and openness about the future seems to be the only constant!

Following the philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer, Urban (2010) turns to *Hermeneutics*, which focuses on creating understandings between people, through dialogue. It puts *ways of being in the world* before *ways of knowing;* the knowledge is produced through interactions. Accordingly, "the 'other' in this dialogic encounter has to be acknowledged in his or her autonomy and for his or her genuine contribution to the emergence of an understanding" (p. 16). Hermeneutics also requires the practitioner to reflect on their own contribution to the dialogue, including cultural

and historical biases. Urban's proposal for rethinking professionalism in ECE is therefore based on "*creating understanding* through *dialogue across differences*" (p. 16, emphasis in the original).

There are three key aspects to Urban's (2010) framework:

• The focus should be moved from the individual to the system, and specifically to the reciprocal relationships between people at all layers in the professional system. One-way, hierarchical relationships will not produce the dialogue necessary for producing professional knowledge in an uncertain environment.

• The system must create spaces for dialogue to occur and for critical questions to be asked; and this must happen at all layers of the system. It cannot be left to chance in a professional system, nor left to an individual. The aim is to co-construct knowledge, not simply apply received knowledge.

• The questions asked should be moved away from only the restrictive '*what works*' to questions of meaning, value and purpose; away from practice as a technical activity towards an ethical endeavour. There are many possible futures – which one(s) to aim for? These questions should be debated at all layers of the professional system.

A key feature of Urban's professional system is that while it assumes a professional practitioner with a pre-existing credential, it is not dependent upon such people for its professionalism. This makes it possible to apply these ideas to analyse Playcentre, where members have a wide range of experience and education but relatively few pre-existing ECE credentials.

Playcentre as a Professional System

Many aspects of Playcentre practice mesh well with Urban's (2010) framework, creating the potential to produce professional education outcomes.

Reciprocal relationships at all layers of the system

Urban insists that relationships in a professional system must be reciprocal. This does not mean that power or contributions within a relationship need to be the same or evenly matched. Rather it means that interactions are not unidirectional; it is expected that everyone will speak as well as listen, will give support as well as receive it, and will contribute to a knowledge base as well as apply it. In Playcentre practice there are some features which allow for these reciprocal relationships, notably: working in duty teams to provide education for all the children who attend a session; the democratic nature of the organisation which allows all members to contribute to decision making; and the Association structure which supports the individual centres whilst being controlled by them.

In a Playcentre, the duty team members commit to working together to provide for the education of all children who attend the session. Duty teams are arranged to include a balance of experienced and new members

(see for example, Brooklyn Playcentre, 2012), as well as meeting Playcentre qualifications licensing requirements (Ministry of Education, 2001). Each duty team member has their child/ren attending their duty session, and there are inevitably times when team members move between roles: the role of an observant team member, being aware of and supporting many children (and adults) in the session, and the role of a parent responding to an immediate need of their child for care. Each team member supports the others when they move between roles in this way, creating a reciprocal expectation that each is at times a supporter, and at times a receiver of support, in the joint project of providing quality ECE (Gibbons, 2005).

Reciprocal relationships are also generated through the shared responsibility for centre decision making, both pedagogical and management decisions. Due to changes introduced in the last two decades, Playcentre decisions are generally made using consensus decision-making tools (Burke, 2011) rather than the formal voting style that had been practiced previously. These techniques allow everyone's opinion to be heard and require negotiation for decisions to be made, as minority views cannot be simply outvoted. Techniques are also used to minimise the dominance of small but vocal groups. This major change to decision making has contributed to a deepening of the democracy that has long been practiced in Playcentre and is used at all levels of the professional system with increasingly effective results as experience is gained with these techniques.

The Association structures to which all centres belong are an integral part of the layers of the Playcentre professional system, and are also based on reciprocal relationships. The centres form the governance body of the Association, and the members elected as officers or employed in various positions are drawn from experienced centre members. In return, the centres are supported in the adult education programme, maintenance of building standards and the smoothing of fluctuations in social capital as experienced members leave once their children start school (Woodhams & Woodhams, 2008). The Association also creates a space for dialogue between centres, which is the second key aspect of Urban's framework.

Space for dialogue and critical questioning

In Playcentre the professional knowledge base is not generated through pre-service teacher education, and parents come with a wide range of knowledges from previous experiences (Manning & Loveridge, 2009). Since the individual knowledge base is extremely variable, Playcentre must rely on a collective knowledge base and the sharing of that knowledge amongst adults in order to produce quality education. This is reflected in the Playcentre licensing agreement, which is based on having a minimum level of Playcentre qualifications spread amongst the teaching team (Ministry of Education, 2001).

Space must be made for these knowledges to be shared and for the constructed professional knowledge to emerge out of the dialogue between these different points of view

and experiences. Some spaces are built into the processes of each centre, such as having a team evaluation meeting at the end of each session as well as specific meetings for assessment and planning of the programme (Stover, 2001). Other spaces are made through the formal and informal discussions and mentoring that occurs through the adult education programme, and the system of liaison or support workers.

Participating in the adult education programme is an expected part of Playcentre, and this is part of its culture (Mitchell et al., 2006). It is not a hierarchical activity, however, with only the newer members being the ones 'in training'. While the level of learning may be different, it is accepted that everyone is on a learning journey. This community of learners is another way that a space is opened for discussions around professional knowledge: when all are considered to be learners, then knowledge invites to be questioned rather than simply received. Self-reflection is routine, but carried out within teams – as much as individually.

The process of on-going education is supported by the local Associations, which provide tutors and liaison people who work with all or some of the centres in the area. This provides an external viewpoint to challenge the knowledge being produced within a centre through roles as 'critical friends' for individuals, as well as facilitators of learning for the collective through sharing experiences and practices from other centres. Here, too, the relationships are reciprocal, enabling the Association workers to learn from those they teach/support, and also to bring this learning to other Associations through Federation national meetings. The network of support opens more spaces for dialogue and to ask critical questions. There are some constraints involved, of course; for example, due to personalities and to social conventions (Manning & Loveridge, 2009). However, Playcentre structure and practice opens the spaces for reciprocal dialogue to occur.

Questions of meaning, value and purpose

Simply creating the space for reflective dialogue and questioning is not enough; the questions themselves are also important. Urban's (2010) framework suggests that the questions reflected on within the professional system must be meaningful to the aspirations of the particular community of learners for their own, and their children's, lives. Peter Moss (2008) further develops what such a community of learners would look like. He suggests they create a "public forum where children and adults meet and which [is] capable of many projects and many possibilities: social, cultural, economic, political, aesthetic, ethical" (p. 124). In particular, the decisions made about which projects, which ethics, which politics, arise from within the group

Adults learning in context, alongside mentors and support people.
Photo courtesy of New Zealand Playcentre Federation. Photographer: Jo Carter

rather than external to it.

The practice and philosophy of emergent leadership within Playcentres provide the opportunity for the group to continually redefine the boundaries of the curriculum and to challenge practices (Manning, Woodhams & Howsan, 2011). New members to the Playcentre community – at any layer of the organisation – are renowned for asking why we do things a certain way. New leaders bring different priorities to their roles and then go through a process of gaining consensus for their new ideas to be trialled. The main feature here is that these questions of *why are we doing this* are debated by the current members of the Playcentre, and thus the knowledge is produced from this dialogue. The process is not always smooth, but that is no reason to suggest that it is ineffective or should not be engaged in. An example here of such ongoing discussions is at the level of the Playcentre Federation, where several years of hard work produced a document that listed Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti[1] values and philosophy statements as separate but complementary philosophies (New Zealand Playcentre Federation, 2011).

Questions of value extend to the belief that working with children and their families in ECE is in itself a valuable thing to do. A benefit of constructing ECE as a profession is that it sends a public message that this work is as valuable as in other teaching sectors, something which 'professional teachers' are concerned about (Dalli, 2006). In Playcentre, those individuals who are deemed to be the most 'professional' tend to be the ones who have an attitude that their work is important and will make a difference to lives, and therefore is worth doing well.

---

1 The names that the NZ Playcentre Federation use for their two caucuses – Māori and Pākehā.

At a professional systems level, the emphasis on parents as competent and capable educators means that Playcentre is seen as a place that values and validates parenting (van Wijk et al., 2007). This leads to a form of spiral reinforcement: Playcentre offers an option for parents who wish to validate their choice to be their children's primary educators, and through participating in a system that is acknowledged to be of professional standard, the parents are likely to act more professionally and therefore become better educators. The end result of a perception of Playcentre as a professional system should lead to better educational outcomes for children.

Conclusion

Using Urban's (2010) framework for professionalism, Playcentre can be considered as a professional system, which helps explain how 'quality' ECE outcomes can be produced within an organisation that relies on 'non-professional' workers without negating the importance to ECE of a professional workforce.

We have highlighted specific practices within Playcentre that demonstrate the capacity for creating reciprocal relationships at all layers of the system, for opening spaces for dialogue and critical questioning to occur, and a culture that leans towards a focus on values, meanings and purpose.

Although we have focused on Playcentre, we would suggest that this way of thinking about professionalism would be useful for other ECE services as well, although the systems would 'look' different in each case. In this view, there would be many different systems contributing to the overall professionalism – or professional system – of the Aotearoa New Zealand ECE sector.

References

Brooklyn Playcentre. (2012). *Roster policy*. Unpublished policy document. Wellington: Author.

Burke, R. (2011). *Making consensus work: Decisions that all can live with*. Auckland: Playcentre Publications.

Dalli, C. (2006). Re-visioning love and care in early childhood: Constructing the future of our profession. *The First Years: New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education: Ngā Tau Tautahi, 8*(1), 5-11.

Dalli, C. (2008). The new teacher in New Zealand. In L. Miller & C. Cable (Eds.), *Professionalism in the early years* (pp. 142-153). London: Hodder Education.

Education Review Office. (2009). *The quality of education and care in Playcentres*. Wellington: Education Review Office.

Gibbons, P. (2005). "The way we do things around here": Environmental and social considerations of the organisational culture of two Playcentres. *New Zealand Research in Early Childhood Education, 8*, 11-27.

Manning, S., & Loveridge, J. (2009). Parents as educators at Playcentre: Understanding the enablers and constraints of teaching practice. *New Zealand Research in Early Childhood Education, 12*, 55-70.

Manning, S., Woodhams, M., & Howsan, S. (2011). Emergent leadership in Playcentre. *Journal of Educational Leadership, Policy and Practice, 26*(2), 3-13.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te whāriki: He whāriki matauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education (2001, 24 August). Qualifications for group supervision in Playcentres. *Circular 2001/16*.

Mitchell, L., Royal Tangaere, A., Mara, D., & Wylie, C. (2006). *Quality in parent/whānau-led services*. Wellington: NZCER/ Ministry of Education.

Mitchell, L., Wylie, C., & Carr, M. (2008). *Outcomes of early childhood education: Literature review*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Moss, P. (2008). The democratic and reflective professional: Rethinking and reforming the early years workforce. In L. Miller & C. Cable (Eds.), *Professionalism in the early years* (pp. 121-130). London: Hodder Education.

New Zealand Playcentre Federation. (2011). NZ Playcentre Federation philosophy. *Playcentre Journal, 142*, 18-19.

Pere, R. (1997). *Te Wheke: A celebration of infinite wisdom* (2nd ed.). Gisborne, New Zealand: Ao Ako Global Learning.

Stover, S. (Ed.). (2001). *Planning for Playcentres: A hands-on resource*. Wellington: Ministry of Education/New Zealand Playcentre Federation.

Te One, S., Podmore, V. N., Dingemanse, T., Dawson, L., Pattinson, S., Jones, J., Matthews, K., Higham, J. (2007). "Relationships and interactions": A research project on supporting parents alongside children's education (SPACE) programme in a Playcentre. *Early Childhood Folio 11,* pp. 10-14.

Urban, M. (2010). Dealing with uncertainty: Challenges and possibilities for the early childhood profession. In C. Dalli & M. Urban (Eds.), *Professionalism in early childhood education and care: International perspectives* (pp. 4-21). Abington, Oxon, UK: Routledge.

van Wijk, N., & Wilton Playcentre members. (2007). Wilton Playcentre: A community of learners, tall and short. In A. Meade (Ed.), *Cresting the waves: Innovation in early childhood education* (pp. 56-62). Wellington: NZCER.

Woodhams, M. (2012, Winter). Playcentre early education: Benefiting children by developing parents. *Children 81*: 42-45.

Woodhams, B., & Woodhams, M. (2008). *Supporting Playcentres in the 21st century*. Wellington: New Zealand Playcentre Federation.

Wylie, C., Thompson, J., & Kerslake Hendricks, A. (1996). *Competent children at 5: Families and early education*. Wellington: NZCER.

It's just part of being a professional

Looking back and looking forward at self-review

Claire McLachlan and Anne Grey

'Self-review' is a fairly recent addition to the role of teachers. In 1999, a government 'quality' initiative for centre-based self-review was launched (Ministry of Education, 1999). In this article, the historic prompts for self-review are considered, as well as two studies into the possibilities and challenges for centres undertaking self-review as part of the quality assurance systems required of early childhood centres.

Looking back at policy development

From the late 1980s, major changes in the role of teachers within early childhood education were underway. Step by step, a 'quiet revolution' (Smith, 1992) was occurring which was building on the pillars of a united educational sector articulated in *Education to be more* (Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group, 1988) and developed through a series of policy initiatives focused on 'quality' and 'quality assurance'.

The concept of self-review was first introduced to early childhood teachers in 1999 when *The quality journey: He haerenga whai hua* (Ministry of Education, 1999) was distributed to all centres. This was the last of three 'quality' documents produced by the Ministry of Education in a three year period. The first was the *Revised Statement of Desirable Objectives and Practices* (Ministry of Education, 1996), commonly known as 'the DOPs', that set out broad aims for centres to follow. The second, *Quality in action: Te mahi whai hua* (Ministry of Education, 1998), enlarged on the DOPs, providing practical examples of how those aims could be recognised in e.c.e. centres. The third quality document, *The quality journey: He haerenga whai hua* (Ministry of Education, 1999) outlined a process for centre teams to systematically evaluate their own work through a model of reflection and the use of 'quality indicators'. The lead author, Anne Meade, introduced *The quality journey (TQJ)* at the 6th early childhood convention (Meade, 1999) and indicated that initially the document had been positioned as part of a (later abandoned) plan for a voluntary national accreditation system, similar to what has existed since 1985 in the United States under the auspices of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (2012).

Initially, *The quality journey* was generally viewed with resistance and suspicion, both because the terminology was confusing and because it was seen as reflecting a top-down accountability (Wansbrough, 2003; 2004). While it was not mandatory for centres to implement *The quality journey*, and while the metaphor of the 'journey' presented the self-review process as open-ended, there was an element of control suggested in strategies such as setting standards of practice and for improving outcomes.

In addition, *The quality journey* contained a set of teaching, learning and development indicators for measuring teaching performance ('quality indicators') whereby each aspect of the teachers' performance was judged from high to low quality. Another criticism was that *TQJ* advised teaching teams to form their own indicators of quality, without guidance on how. It was also critiqued because it emphasised management processes at the expense of leadership, resulting in restrictive control of teachers' practice (Edwards, 2000).

Seven years later, *Ngā arohaehae whai hua: Self-review guidelines for early childhood education* (Ministry of Education, 2006) was released to all centres. It outlined a clearer review process for teachers to follow. However *The quality journey* remains a pivotal document in the articulation of aspirations for e.c. teachers to work collaboratively in their own teams towards contextually meaningful goals. Part of the legacy of *The quality journey* are two Ministry of Education-commissioned implementation studies; one in Auckland and one in Christchurch. Findings from Auckland's AUT study are used in this article to illustrate how teachers adapted to the notion of self-review and these are briefly compared to the Christchurch findings.

Implementing The quality journey: The AUT experience

In 2002, the final milestone reports of the two *TQJ* implementation studies were presented to the Ministry of Education. The AUT study consisted of working with two teachers from each of 72 centres from Auckland, Northland and Taranaki. It was conducted by Anne Grey and Claire McLachlan, with the assistance of Doug Haynes, who had considerable experience in quality assurance.

Our team used Fetterman's (1996) notions of "empowerment evaluation", in which we could act as "coach and guide", rather than as experts. We developed the following ground rules for working:

- *Empowerment*: the process should be positive and enable participants to undertake their own reviews;

- *Self-determination*: participants should own the review;

- *A culture of responsibility, not blame* (Greenman & Stonehouse, 1997):

- *Tools (evaluation methods)*: the process should provide suitable approaches, strategies and skills to conduct small-scale research or self-review.

The programme was designed to be participatory, so teachers were actively involved in the learning process (Ladyshewsky, 1995). This model of effective learning for adults suggests learning is influenced by non-cognitive factors such as pacing, meaningfulness to personal context and motivation (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991), suggesting participants try out new ideas in a safe learning environment. The focus was on promoting knowledge, understanding and practical skills for self-review in their own centres.

Four day-long workshops focussed on the foundations of quality as identified by the DOPs: teaching, learning and development of children; adult communication and development; and organisation and management. Each workshop provided information, study of the resource, and working sessions on planning a review. In addition, participants received a blue 'travel guide' with a summary of tools used and relevant background reading, many of which came from academic and corporate sources.

Participants were introduced to 33 tools that could be used for self-review. We also developed a format to use for designing review methodology, which included key aspects of self-review: aims, audience, types of review methodology, data collection, resources, timing, reporting and sharing results. Although not all participants used the format, it provided a starting point for discussion.

Anne Grey visited each centre twice as part of the study. Anne saw her role as coach, guide and support person, with strict professional boundaries. Her role was not to evaluate the quality of the centre in any way, nor to initiate the review. The centres owned the process, chose the topic, chose the methodology, and conducted it.

The study included workshops, support from Anne and an evaluation methodology to examine the implementation of *TQJ* in centres. We adopted methodological triangulation (the use of more than one research method) to cross-check the validity of our evaluation. Triangulation is seen as particularly powerful important when a complex phenomenon (such as teachers' beliefs and practices) is to be studied (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2011). The methods we adopted were as follows:

- A pre-, mid- ,and post- survey of all participants;

- Focus groups at each workshop (used for evaluating

workshops, content and changing concerns);

- Feedback on review projects;

- In-depth interviews with participants; and

- Evaluation of *The quality journey* document.

Results of surveys

The survey instrument used Likert scales and open ended questions to probe participants' understanding of issues related to the review topics and to the DOPs. All surveys were posted to participants.

In 2000, only 14% of participants stated in the first survey that they were knowledgeable about *The quality journey* resource, although in 2001, this figure was higher at 21%. Most were reasonably confident that they had the ability to self-review (91% confident in 2000, 75% in 2001), but were unsure about the processes involved. Focus group data suggested participants felt threatened by the concept of self-review, perceiving this to mean that someone would be evaluating their performance.

Survey results indicated that workshops were valuable for demystifying self-review and helped to prepare participants to implement self-review. There was strong agreement that knowledge and skills in relation to the DOPs had been enhanced through using *The quality journey* and attending workshops. Although it is clear that teachers were confident to implement new ideas if they were given appropriate resources and training, but time remained a concern; teachers considered self-review increased their paper work and also could take them away from time with children.

Interviews with teachers

All 144 teachers were interviewed at the end of their year of involvement in the study. The theoretical approach adopted for the in-depth interview drew on phenomenology, because we sought to elicit the experiences of participants in the project. According to Moss and Pence (1994), phenomenology "seeks to understand the lived experiences of individuals" (p. 22) and to "track changes in participants' perceptions over time, describing stages and phases inherent in particular experience" (Moss & Pence, 1994, p. 28).

Interview topics included perceptions of *The quality journey*, self-review topics and their experiences, any issues regarding implementation, and examples of teachers' or children's work produced. Interviews provided rich data that reflected participants' enthusiasm and pride in the artefacts produced.

Although most participants were confident in their ability to understand children's learning and development and considered they initiated quality interactions, many considered they had developed the ability to review and evaluate their success in extending children's learning in simple but systematic ways. Many took a fresh look at interactions with children and planning, and liked the focus on reviewing teaching and learning for the benefit of children. For many, self-review enabled teachers to examine their conversations with children, and considered interactions had improved

because documentation of learning had improved. For others, *The quality journey* had brought the DOPs and their policies to life, so staff documentation of children's learning improved and they could see benefits of using simple tools to give parents the information they wanted about children's learning and development.

Most participants stated that their ability to establish and maintain quality assurance systems for the curriculum offered within the centre had increased. Many centres were using a portfolio system for children, but admitted that the methods used were 'hit and miss' and not necessarily shared by all staff. Participation had assisted them to establish centre-wide procedures for managing this effectively. For some teachers, the sharing of information about review tasks and quality systems across centres was a positive outcome of workshops, which increased confidence in their own systems and procedures. One of the major benefits identified was the opportunity to set up, reflect on or revise systems and procedures within centres.

For some, perceptions of quality had not changed, but the participants were more aware of different ways to design or evaluate systems for quality. For others, the notion of a programme of review was a relief, as it made the notion of self-review less daunting. Although some participants were already familiar with self-review, they indicated that they enjoyed thinking about it from a broader perspective, and were very reflective about how to ensure quality systems in their centre. Many of the tools used for review became integrated into centre meeting practices as a method of team building and ensuring staff participation. However, some found it difficult to get ideas across to others in the centre, which they attributed to a variety of factors, including the resource only being in English.

Parental involvement was an on-going challenge for many, but some reported that reviews had increased parental interest and involvement. Many participants discussed the practicalities of using different 'tools' to assist communication and collaboration both with staff and parents, highlighting diverse strategies to achieve solutions. In addition, *TQJ's* emphasis on 'diversity of practice' was seen as a strength by many participants.

However, it was also important to note that enthusiasm on the part of the supervisor after workshops was not enough to get staff in all centres motivated and to meet the challenge of getting 'all on board' with new systems. 'Teamwork' was an issue discussed by most participants: both the difficulty of getting staff to adopt new ideas, but also the tremendous team building outcomes associated with adopting *TQJ* strategies. Many commented on the difficulties of only having two staff from each centre attend workshops, and trying to share the ideas back in the centre. For some, the reality of releasing staff to attend workshops was a struggle, both financially and in terms of finding relievers. This was of importance in the Far North, where it was often difficult for the kindergarten teachers in particular to find relievers.

For Playcentre participants, the notion of 'overloading'

featured; for example when *TQJ* participants sometimes struggled to get others interested in their projects. Some participants were conscious that their new skills were not being passed on and would leave with them when their child moved onto school or another centre.

Some participants identified practical constraints to implementing quality review systems, such as inadequate equipment, busy workloads and staff turnover. These all got in the way of good intentions. For some centres, there were cultural barriers to changing practices with young children, and a common concern was staffing needs for professional learning.

At the final workshop, participants were asked to reflect on *The quality journey* itself and how it could be improved. Most found it useful and well structured, but said that they would not have utilised it fully if they hadn't attended workshops and had accompanying support. Most suggested that the Ministry of Education should provide exemplars or case studies to aid understanding. Participants also identified that goal setting, with a focus on quality improvement, was more empowering for centres than setting standards, which engendered a sense of failure. Using a range of tools, combined with setting quality goals to be achieved, was seen as a more empowering approach.

Results from interviews, focus groups, questionnaires and document evaluation indicated that the opportunity to try out practical tools was the major benefit of this implementation study. Many participants indicated that their prior learning had been inadequate in terms of learning methodologies for self-review, so they appreciated learning how to design and use research tools in their centre, rather than simply reflect on why they should review. This approach was well suited to early childhood teachers, who appreciated the opportunity to talk, try out new ideas and express their opinions and creativity.

Comparison of AUT and Christchurch study

While the AUT study found that it was important that teachers understood the tools necessary to complete a self-review process (Grey, McLachlan-Smith & Haynes, 2001), the study in Christchurch reported that teachers found it difficult in defining standards for quality teaching practice (Meade, Grey with Depree & Hayward, 2002). A follow-up study in Christchurch identified eight barriers to self-review (Depree & Hayward, 2004), which included teacher turnover, insufficient time, limitations of space, limited resources, lack of money, limited access to technology, lack of confidence by teachers and differing philosophies within a team. At the same time, four factors that enabled successful self-review were identified. These were the inclusion of all the stakeholders in the process, strong stable leadership, effective management systems, and access to professional learning.

Looking forward

A decade on, it is insightful to reflect on whether these eight barriers and four enablers, along with our findings, are still relevant to the effective completion of a self-review.

There has certainly been a move away from seeing action research as the only way for early childhood teachers to review their teaching practice. Both White (2007) and Grey (2010) suggest that self-review of practice should not only examine the behaviour involved in teaching practice, but should also discuss the beliefs that underpin self-review itself, and then examine practice in order to ascertain whether the realities of practice reflect the rhetoric of practice. Here self-review becomes a process of meaning-making that emphasises professional dialogue (Grey, 2011) and marks a shift away from the top-down approach that was a criticism of *The quality journey (*Wansbrough, 2003). This shift indicates that self-review has been integrated into an early childhood teachers' expected role.

By accepting that self-review of teaching practice and discussions about values underpinning teaching are part of the job, teachers enrich their professional image. In response to constantly changing social, economic and political factors, a teacher's beliefs and practices may need to evolve significantly. For this reason, an important part of a teacher's role is to be self-aware and reflective about both their own individual teaching practice, but also the teaching practice as a team. When this is part of a teacher's job, their professional knowledge base is blended with thoughtful actions so that sound decisions are made about each child's learning.

Additionally, if time is put aside on a regular basis to do this, a culture of respectful and caring listening is built, where teachers are able to affirm and support each other's practice in a way that enhances professional relationships within the workplace. In this way, teachers create their own accountability within each teaching team which complement any external accountability requirements. Making self-review "part of the job" creates opportunities for teachers to reflect on and discuss their practice in meaningful ways as a teaching team. Teachers are then able to demonstrate the agency that allows them to move beyond the resistance and suspicion that was evident when *The quality journey* was first released in 1999.

References

Depree, L., & Hayward, K. (2004). Successes, barriers and enablers to maintaining quality improvement in early childhood services in New Zealand. *New Zealand Research in Early Childhood Education, 7*, 75-89.

Early Childhood Care and Education Working Group. (1988). *Education to be more*. Wellington: Government Print.

Edwards, W. (2000). The quality journey: He haerenga whai hua. *Early Education, 23*, 23-26.

Fetterman, D.M. (1996). Empowerment evaluation: An introduction to theory and practice. In D.M. Fetterman, S.J. Kaftarian & A. Wandersman (Eds.) *Empowerment evaluation: Knowledge and tools for self-assessment and accountability.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Fraenkel, J. R., & Wallen, N. E. (2011). *How to design and evaluate research in education.* Sydney, NSW, Australia: McGraw-Hill.

Grey, A. (2010). *Self-review as practical philosophy: A case study in early childhood education in Aotearoa New Zealand.* Unpublished Doctor of Education thesis, AUT University, Auckland.

Grey, A. (2011). Professional learning as professional dialogue. *New Zealand Journal of Teachers Work, 8*(1), 21-32.

Grey, A., McLachlan-Smith, C. & Haynes, D. (2001). *The quality journey: Milestone report. Report prepared for the Ministry of Education.* Auckland: AUT University.

Ladyshewsky, R. (1995). *Clinical teaching. HERDSA Gold Guide No.1.* Canberra, ACT, Australia: HERDSA.

Meade, A., & Grey, A. with Depree, L., & Hayward, K. (2002). Quality improvement in early childhood services in New Zealand using *The quality journey* resource. *Early Childhood Folio, 6*, 2-6.

Meade, A. (1999). A big enough challenge to engage our best thinking: Early childhood quality. *Proceedings of the 7th Early Childhood Convention* (pp. 255-262). Nelson: 7th Early Childhood Convention.

Merriam, S.B. & Caffarella, R.S. (1991). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1996b). *Revised statement of desirable objectives and practices (DOPs) for chartered early childhood services in New Zealand.* Wellington: Author.

Ministry of Education. (1998). *Quality in action: Te mahi whai hua.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1999). *The quality journey: He haerenga whai hua.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2006). *Nga arohaehae whai hua: Self-review guidelines for early childhood education.* Wellington: Learning Media

Moss, P. & Pence, A. (1994). (Eds.) *Valuing quality in early childhood services: New approaches to defining quality.* London, UK: Paul Chapman.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (2012). *Why NAEYC accreditation?* Available from http://www.naeyc.org/academy/interested/whyaccreditation

Smith, A. (1992). Early childhood education in New Zealand: The winds of change. In G. Woodhill, J. Bernhard & L. Prochner (Eds.), *International Handbook of Early Childhood Education* (pp. 383-398). New York: Garland.

Wansbrough, D. (2003). *Pioneering the quality journey: A case study of a childcare centre undertaking their first review.* Unpublished M.Ed thesis, Victoria University, Wellington NZ.

Wansbrough, D. (2004). Self-review - The hot topic. *Early Education, 35,* 23-30.

White, E. J. (2007). Systematic inquiry as evaluative activity: Self-review in early childhood education. *Early Education, 42*, 26-29.

'Ka Hikitea' and e.c.e.

Reviewing for Te Ao Māori

By Jan Mills

Abstract

Ka Hikitia: Managing for success **aims to change education perceptions and practices regarding Māori educational outcomes (Ministry of Education, 2008). Drawing on historical and contemporary sources, this article considers its relevance to early childhood education, advocates for pedagogical strategies appropriate for Māori, and proposes that centre-based self-review can be utilised in a proactive process of shifting discourses from one that emphasises deficit to one that promotes credit.**

Māori education discourses: Historical and contemporary

In the mid-1830s, Aotearoa New Zealand was inhabited by two groups of people: Māori (the indigenous people), and Pākehā , the newly-settled people of European descent. Māori were keen economists who recognised that mutual co-operation with the settlers and traders would be beneficial to both parties. However, the developing lawlessness among the rapidly increasing Pākehā population was an ongoing concern to both Māori and the British Crown (Hayward, 2004; Paterson, 2004).

In 1835, James Busby, serving as the official 'British Resident', assembled 34 Māori chiefs at Waitangi in the Bay of Islands, in order to sign a declaration of independence designed to establish Aotearoa New Zealand as an independent state under Māori sovereignty for the "preservation of peace and regulation of trade" (Walker, 2004, p. 88). Just five years later, William Hobson, the newly appointed Crown Consul, was dispatched from Britain in order to gain from the Māori a consensual surrender of this sovereignty and establish a contract with the chiefs for the sale or relinquishment of land to the British Crown alone. This was intended to pave the way for a formal agreement between the two parties (Hayward, 2004; Walker, 2004).

The Treaty of Waitangi was drafted first in English then translated into *te reo* Māori. However, what was intended to be a simple founding document has instead become a document that "provokes intense debate" (Hayward, 2004, p. 151) due to the misinterpretation of words used by the translators (Walker, 2004). Wilson (2002) reports that while the first article of the English Treaty of Waitangi version, the Crown suggests that Māori give up their sovereignty over the land,in the Māori version, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, the word 'sovereignty' was translated as *kawanatanga*

(governorship) implying that Māori only give up their 'governorship' over the land, not their sovereign authority over it. Article Two of the English treaty version affirms to Māori the possession of their lands, forests, fisheries and estates and states that any land sales made by Māori were to be voluntary. Contrarily, the Māori version, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, guarantees that Māori retain *tino rangatiratanga* (supreme right to exercise sovereignty) over their land and *taonga katoa* (all things treasured) (Wilson, 2002; Ritchie, 1995).

The Māori text, *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, was signed on February 6th 1840 by Hobson and eventually over 500 Māori chiefs). However, the promises of protection, participation and a power-sharing partnership have not eventuated for Māori (MacFarlane, Glynn, Grace, Penetito, & Bateman, 2008).

The majority of Aotearoa New Zealand's early settlers came from Great Britain bringing with them not only their perceptions of class and the rights afforded to land owners, but attitudes of racial superiority. By the end of the 19th century, the Native Lands Acts of 1862 and 1865 had stripped Māori of their communal lands resulting in their political and economic marginalisation (Paterson, 2004; Simon, 2000). In 1852 this was further compounded when the Crown passed the Constitution Act establishing a Pākehā self-ruling government reinforcing European values and recognising 'individual' land ownership as a requirement for voting rights; thereby excluding Māori, who considered land to be communally owned by iwi (Simon, 2000; Ward, 1999).

The colonial education system in Aotearoa New Zealand was provided by missionaries, styled within European frameworks, and aimed at 'civilising' the Māori population (Hokowhitu, 2004). Māori viewed education as a way of improving and extending their existing knowledge. However, the British regarded schooling as key to Māori assimilation and their acceptance of British law and culture (Simon, 2000). Traditional *mātauranga* Māori (Māori knowledge) was undermined and invalidated in order to aid the assimilation of Māori into an educational system that would validate British values and guarantee their indoctrination into western society.

When Māori rebelled against European schools' constrictive and harsh ways of teaching and learning, preferring to keep their children at home, parliamentarians passed the Native Schools Act of 1867 as a means of

ensuring young Māori continued to attend schools under their jurisdiction. The Native Schools were culturally alien and forbade the use of *te reo* Māori. They delivered a curriculum based on the European perception of Māori being of limited intelligence, which thus provided young Māori with training in non-academic skills and trades that would better serve their Pākehā employers (Hokowhitu, 2004; Simon, 2000).

A pattern of Māori underachievement in school was becoming ingrained and by 1892, with less than one-sixth of their land left, Māori were experiencing subsistence lifestyles and feelings of demoralisation and inferiority (Simon, 2000). The establishment of the Native District High Schools in 1941 further perpetuated Māori educational underachievement and low economic status by providing no access to School Certificate examinations for Māori children and therefore no access to the qualifications required to work in higher paid positions (Hokowhitu, 2004; Simon, 2000).

The real struggle is to build a bridge between policy and practice

In 1969 the Native Schools were abolished and students transferred to public schools; where Māori often experienced hostility and indifference to their needs along with further inequalities that only served to widen the gap between their achievements and those of Pākehā (Simon, 2000).

Māori were not only disempowered through their loss of land, inferior education and low socio-economic position, but by the loss of their language (Ritchie, 1995). Pere (1997) states "Language is the lifeline and sustenance of a culture" (p.9). The debilitation of *te reo* Māori can be connected to colonisation (Ka'ai, 2004); its decline contributing to a loss of identity for Māori (Ritchie, 1995; 1999) in a land where they, the indigenous people, were now a minority population (Smith, 2009). The Western worldview of homogeneity, or 'one size fits all, is contrary to the Māori celebration of diversity (Ka'ai & Higgins, 2004). The incongruous policies and practices within Aotearoa New Zealand's education system continued to produce social and economic inequalities for Māori (Simon, 2000) and placed the blame for Māori children's failure on their individual dispositions and their home environments (Ritchie, 1995); thus producing beliefs which have led to the 'deficit model' of today (Hokowhitu, 2004).

Current Māori education: Focus and policy

The state education sector began recognising the need to address concerns regarding Māori educational outcomes, resulting in the formation of *Ka Hikitia – Managing for Success* (Ministry of Education, 2008), which promotes shifting Māori education away from a model of deficit to an approach that emphasises credit. This requires major changes in the education sectors' perceptions and practices. At the heart of *Ka Hikitea* is an acknowledgement of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* as guaranteeing Māori children's rights to gain the skills and knowledge needed for their success; and the protection of *te reo* Māori (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Ka Hikitia promotes educational success for Māori from early childhood (ECE) through to tertiary education, requiring all sectors to respond by building foundations for Māori children's learning that reflect personalised approaches which engage the learners in power-sharing partnerships; recognising that for Māori children, their *whānau* participation, sense of identity and culture are essential to their success (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Ka Hikitia acknowledges the importance of a high quality ECE sector in grounding a strong learning foundation that will enable children to continue to engage in education and the diverse range of contributors to Māori education success: educators, children, parents, *whānau*, Māori communities, *hapū* (sub-tribes) and *iwi* (tribes.

The principle strategies in *Ka Hikitia* are aimed at facilitating the success of Māori by acknowledging:

- Māori potential - recognising the unlimited possibilities of all Māori learners;

- Māori cultural advantage - acknowledging the positive advantage of being Māori; and

- Māori capability - all Māori have an inherent capacity for success (Ministry of Education, 2008).

For Aotearoa New Zealand's ECE centres, this translates into increasing Māori children's participation, and on teaching practices focused on aligning with the aspirations Māori hold regarding education (Ministry of Education, 2010). As Ritchie (1995) explains, the "real struggle is to build a bridge between policy and practice" (p. 80).

Ka Hikitia will expect a quality ECE centre to begin to build this bridge by implementing an effective way of teaching Māori children that is based on reciprocal relationships and effective partnerships with *whānau* (Ministry of Education, 2008). ECE centres can realise this expectation and enable Māori children to achieve success and still remain 'Māori' by:

- involving Māori children's *whānau* in their learning and development;

- making meaningful connections to the children's home values and culture and improving communication between homes and centres;

- valuing and sustaining the learning of *te reo me ngā tikanga* Māori (Māori language and customs) and *Te Ao Māori*; and

- building on children's prior knowledge and skills (Ministry of Education, 2008).

An effective transition from ECE to school is essential to a Māori child's future education success. *Ka Hikitia* expects

ECE centres to acknowledge this in their curriculum by strengthening literacy and numeracy skills for the transitioning child; and by supporting the child and their *whānau* with the timely provision of information and appropriate resources regarding transitions (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Centre self-review process: Consultation and data gathering

Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua: Self-review Guidelines for Early Childhood Education (Ministry of Education, 2006) can assist early childhood teachers, management and *whānau* with reviewing their practice alongside the major 'stakeholders' in Māori education in each centre's community; Māori children, parents and *whānau*, teachers, centre management, local *hapū/iwi* or *kaumātua* and *kuia* (elders) (Ministry of Education, 2010).

The first step in gathering data to inform the review process should involve conferring with local Māori in order to identify their appropriate communication, research and consultation protocols (Ministry of Education, 1998). The following guidelines are suggested in order for ECE centres to involve Māori in a consultation process that is collaborative grounded in a commitment to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* (Ritchie & Rau, 2006):

- Meeting '*kanohi ki te kanohi*' (face to face) with local *hapū/iwi* and *kaumātua/kuia*, regarding *tikanga* Māori and Māori aspirations (Ministry of Education, 2010). This is essential to the building of trust between centre staff and *whānau*; (Ritchie & Rau, 2006).

- Willingness for centres to adopt attitudes reflecting '*titiro, whakarongo, kōrero*' (look, listen, and then speak) when Māori are involved in consultation processes (Ritchie & Rau, 2006).

- Practicing '*manaakitanga*' (sharing and hosting) of the people, providing food and reflecting attitudes of generosity and care toward participants (Ritchie & Rau, 2006).

- Being mindful of the '*mana o te tangata*' (prestige of the people), demonstrating an openness and mutual respect for one another (Ritchie & Rau, 2006).

- Observing a respect for *tikanga* Māori throughout meetings, such as welcoming addresses and introductions, *karakia* (opening and closing prayers, grace), sharing of *kai* (food), farewells (Ministry of Education, 2010).

- Concentrated effort towards maintaining an ongoing relationship with the *iwi/hapū* involved in the review process should be paramount (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Suitable data gathering methods would also need to be a topic of discussion with Māori before proceeding. Gathering data using narrative methodology may be suitable because it relies on respectful relationships with its participants, thus encouraging trust and upholding integrity (Ritchie & Rau, 2006).

Relationships are essential to the review process (Ministry of Education, 2006) and relationship-building and data gathering opportunities could be established through a number of informal group discussions with participants, rather than individual interviews with their possible power connotations. It should be noted that it takes time to develop relationships (Ritchie & Rau, 2006) and the review process time-line should accommodate that. *Kai* should be provided during discussions and ample time and opportunity given for participants to ask and receive information about what is being reviewed and why (Ministry of Education, 2010). An atmosphere that highlights the value of *whānau* contribution throughout the process will foster participation by Māori and a 'listening' disposition that reflects openness to the views of others, should be adopted by the centre (Ritchie & Rau, 2008).

Implementing Ka Hikitia expectations: Key strategies for centres

For Māori, learning and teaching is based on *whanaungatanga* (kindred relationships) and *tikanga* (protocols); with *whānau* at the cornerstone of children's learning and development and teachers in the roles of contributing partners (Ministry of Education, 2009; Ritchie & Rau, 2010). The ECE curriculum, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996), provides guidelines for teachers and centre management in relation to the implementation of learning and teaching practice grounded in a commitment to *Te Tiriti o Waitangi*, which can be described as 'Tiriti-based' practice (Ritchie & Rau, 2006). The incorporation of *Te Ao Māori* concepts required by *Te Whāriki* is consistent with the expectations of *Ka Hikitia* (Ministry of Education, 2008). With its aspiration of children becoming competent and confident learners and with its underpinning principles of *Whakamana* (Empowerment), *Kotahitanga* (Holistic Development), *Whānau Tangata* (Family and Community) and *Ngā Hononga* (Relationships), *Te Whāriki* aims to provide protection for *te reo me ngā tikanga Māori* and affirmation for the child within *Te Ao Māori* contexts (Ministry of Education, 2006; 2009).

Analysing the data gathered about a centre's current practice, regarding implementation of *Ka Hikitia* expectations, will lead to an awareness of any areas that need to change and/or to improve (Ministry of Education, 2006). Key areas of focus and strategies that may be implemented to bring about an effective change in practice may include:

- ***Whakamana*** - **Fostering reciprocal relationships between a centre and *whānau* and encouraging parent participation in children's learning**:

   Māori children are empowered when their parents and *whānau* participation and contribution to their learning is valued and facilitated by centre Empowering Māori children to reach their full potential may be realised when educators practice Māori values, respect the knowledge and skills children bring with them, and actively build on these. Implementing *Tiriti*-based practice means daily introducing learning experiences

which aim to 'normalise' and prioritise *Te Ao Māori* ways of being and knowing which can ideally be facilitated through the presence of *kaumātua* and/or *kuia*). *Tiriti*-based teaching practice displays genuine *aroha* (reciprocal, loving relationships) and *manaakitanga* to *whānau* by greeting with an embrace, being generous with their time, and practising welcoming rituals and introductions for new families (Ritchie & Rau, 2006; Ritchie & Rau, 2008; Ritchie & Rau, 2010).

- **Kotahitanga - Sustained teaching of *Te Ao Māori* and *te reo me ngā tikanga Māori*:**

  Children are directly influenced by their physical, emotional, cognitive, social, cultural and spiritual connections (Ministry of Education, 1996). Embedding into centre practice this *Te Ao* Māori holistic view of learning and development involves incorporating *te reo Māori* as a preferred way of passing on knowledge and exposing teachers and children to *te reo* Māori and *tikanga* learning. Meaningful ways could include:

  - *waiata* (song);
  - *mihi* (greeting process);
  - *poi* (traditional swinging ball used in dance)*;*
  - *rākau* (stick games);
  - *pōwhiri* (welcoming process); and
  - *karakia* (Ritchie & Rau, 2010).

  Affirming concepts of *whakawhanaungatanga* (relationship building) enables all families attending the ECE service to experience the spirituality within *Te Ao Māori* through a centre culture that demonstrates respect and concern for the inherent characteristics of *wairua* (spirituality), *mana* (power, prestige) and *mauri* (life-force) in all people (Ritchie & Rau, 2006; 2008; Ministry of Education, 2009).

- **Whānau Tangata - Meaningful links between the values and culture of children's homes and the centre:**

  Acknowledgement that affirming Māori children's identity *as Māori* is key to their learning involves ongoing consultation with Māori children's *whānau, hapū* and *iwi* to uphold the connections Māori children have with their *whakapapa* (genealogy) and the knowledge and skills associated with it. The concept of *whakapapa* is foundational to Māori pedagogy and children understand where they come from through learning about *Te Ao* Māori: their history; genealogy; legends; songs; obligations; and responsibilities. *Tiriti*-based practice that aligns with *Te Whāriki* requirements and *Ka Hikitia* expectations, will see teachers caring for children's and parents' spiritual wellbeing and identity through active engagement with *Te Ao* Māori concepts, such as *karakia, waiata* and *whakataukī* (traditional

sayings, proverbs) and observing Māori celebrations, such as Matariki (Education Review Office, 2010; Ka'ai, 2004; Pere, 1997; Ritchie & Rau, 2008; Ritchie & Rau, 2010).

- **Ngā Hononga – Providing support for parents and children transitioning to school:**

  Tiriti-based practice required by *Te Whāriki* encourages cooperative interactions with adults and peers (Ministry of Education, 1996). Centres should provide children and *whānau* with information about transition to school policies and procedures and the differences they may encounter when moving on to school. Clear information is essential if children and *whānau* are to be cared for and supported throughout school transitions (Ministry of Education, 2010). Supportive communication demonstrates *manaakitanga,* building strong relationships with children that will enable teachers to truly 'know' the children and, likewise, their *whānau*; giving parents the confidence to be able to voice the aspirations they hold for their children without feeling *whakamā* (embarrassment) (Ritchie & Rau, 2006).

Conclusion

Because inequities persist for Māori as a result of the history of colonisation, the education sector is being required by the Ministry of Education to address these, and move from deficit discourses to viewing the cultural capital of Māori as a source of potential and capability (Ministry of Education, 2008). The early childhood education sector is well-placed to meet the current expectations of the Education Review Office with regard to the implementation of centre self-review (2010). This paper has identified how a focus generated from this expectation can be utilised for centre self-review. Furthermore, it is important that the review process be informed by recent relevant research, in order to identify possible future teaching strategies.

He aha te mea nui ō te ao?

He tāngata, he tāngata, he tāngata!

What is the most important thing in the world?

It is people! It is people! It is people!

Acknowledgement:

References

Education Review Office. (2010). *Success for Māori children in early childhood services.* Wellington: Education Review Office.

Hayward, J. (2004). Te Tiriti o Waitangi: The Treaty of Waitangi. In T. Ka'ai, J. Moorfield, M. Reilly, S. Mosley (Eds.) *Ki te whaiao. An introduction to Māori culture and society* (pp. 151-162). Auckland: Pearson Education.

Hokowhitu, B. (2004). Te tāminga o te mātauranga Māori. Colonisation in education. In T. Ka'ai, J. Moorfield, M. Reilly, & S. Mosley (Eds.) *Ki te whaiao. An introduction to Māori culture and society* (pp. 190-200). Auckland: Pearson Education.

Ka'ai, T. (2004). Te mana o te reo me ngā tikanga: Power and politics of the language. In T. Ka'ai, J. Moorfield, M.Reilly & S. Mosley (Eds.), *Ki Te whaiao: An introduction to Māori culture and society* (pp. 201-213). Auckland: Pearson Education.

Ka'ai, T. & Higgins, R. (2004). Te ao Māori. Māori world-view. In T. Ka'ai, J. Moorfield, M. Reilly, & S. Mosley (Eds.) *Ki te whaiao. An introduction to Māori culture and society* (pp. 13-25). Auckland: Pearson Education.

MacFarlane, A., Glynn, T., Grace, W., Penetito, W. & Bateman, S. (2008). Indigenous epistemology in a national curriculum framework? *Ethnicities, 8* (1), 102-227.

Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early childhood curriculum.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (1998). *Quality in Action: Te mahi whai hua.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2006). *Ngā arohaehae whai hua. Self-review guidelines for early childhood education.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2008). *Ka Hikitia. Managing for success. Māori education strategy 2008-2012.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2009).*Te whatu pōkeka: Kaupapa Māori assessment for learning: Early childhood exemplars.* Wellington: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2010). *Better relationships for better learning.* Retrieved 1 June, 2011, from http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/MaoriEducation/About MaoriEducation/WhoWeAre/EngagementWithMaori.rtf

Paterson, L. (2004). Mana Māori motuhake: Challenges to 'kāwanatanga' 1840-1940. In T. Ka'ai, J. Moorfield, M. Reilly, & S. Mosley (Eds.) *Ki te whaiao. An introduction to Māori culture and society* (pp. 163-170). Auckland: Pearson Education.

Pere, R. (1997). *Te wheke: A celebration of infinite wisdom* (2nd ed.). Gisborne, New Zealand: Ao Ako Global Learning.

Ritchie, J. (1995). *Tino rangatiratanga and the implementation of Te Whāriki.* Paper presented at the Teacher Refresher Course, *Te whāriki*: Te Ahutanga Atu, Hamilton.

Ritchie, J. (1999). The use of te reo Māori in early childhood centres. *Early Education, 16,* 13-17.

Ritchie, J. (2002). Bicultural development: Innovation in implementation of Te whāriki. *Australian Journal of Early Childhood, 28,* (2), 32-37

Ritchie, J. (2003). Te whāriki as a potential lever for bicultural development. In J. Nuttall (Ed.), *Weaving Te whāriki: Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum document in theory and practice* (pp.79-109). Wellington: NZCER.

Ritchie, J. & Rau, C. (2006). *Whakawhanaungatanga. Partnerships in bicultural development in early childhood education.* Final report to the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative Project. Wellington: Teaching Learning Research Institute/NZCER.

Ritchie, J. & Rau, C. (2008). *Te Puawaitanga. Partnerships with tamariki and whānau in bicultural early childhood care and education.* Final report to the Teaching and Learning Research Initiative. Wellington: Teaching Learning Research Institute/NZCER.

Ritchie, J. & Rau, C. (2010). Poipoia te tamaiti kia tū tangata: Identity, belonging and transition. *The First Years: Ngā Tau Tuatahi. New Zealand Journal of Infant and Toddler Education, 12*(1), 16-21.

Simon, J. (2000). Education policy change: Historical perspectives. In J. Marshall, E. Coxon, K. Jenkins, & A. Jones (Eds.) *Politics, policy, pedagogy: Education in Aotearoa New Zealand* (pp.25-68). Palmerston North: Dunmore.

Smith, G. (2009). Mai i te maramatanga, ki te putanga mai o te tahuritanga: From conscientisation to transformation. In J. Andrzejewski, M. Baltodano & L. Symcox (Eds.), *Social justice, peace, and environmental education* (pp. 19-28). New York: Routledge.

Walker, R. (2004). *Ka whawhai tonu matou: Struggle without end* (rev. ed.). Auckland: Penguin.

Ward, A. (1999). *An unsettled history: Treaty claims in New Zealand today.* Wellington: Bridget Williams.

Wilson, K. (2002). The Treaty of Waitangi: Preparing beginning teachers to meet the expectations of the new professional standards. *Waikato Journal of Education, 8,* 27-41.

Contributors

Sue Cherrington is the Associate Dean (Early Childhood Teacher Education) at Victoria University of Wellington. Initially a kindergarten teacher, Sue has been lecturing in early childhood teacher education for more than 20 years. Her research interests are focused on aspects of early childhood teachers' professional practice including teacher thinking and reflection, professionalism and ethics, diversity, and professional development.

Carmen Dalli is Professor of Early Childhood Education at Victoria University of Wellington. Her research focuses on professionalism in early years practice and reveals the intersection of policy and pedagogy in children's and adults' experiences of group-based early childhood settings. She co-convenes a special interest group (SIG) on early childhood professionalism within the European Early Childhood Research Association. Her recent book (with Linda Miller and Mathias Urban) *Early childhood grows up: Towards a critical ecology of the profession* (2012) is based on a six-country project conducted with members of the SIG. She is guest editor of this issue of 'Early Education'.

Judith Duncan is an Associate Professor in Education, College of Education, at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. Her research and teaching interests include early childhood education, children's voices, gender and education, and education policy and practice. Since her doctoral studies, which examined teachers' perspectives of education reforms in the kindergarten sector, she has been involved research that examines early childhood from multiple and interdisciplinary perspectives, placing central to each research project the perspectives of children and their families.

Anne Grey - I began my career in education by teaching primary school in Australia. Since moving to New Zealand I have been involved in early childhood education, firstly in Playcentre with my own children, and then as a supervisor in community early childhood education centres. I have been lecturing at AUT University School of Education since 1997. My masters research was on the topic of leadership in early childhood education. My doctorate was on self-review as practical philosophy in early childhood education.

Claire McLachlan is Associate Professor, Early Years Education at the Massey University Institute of Education. In addition to being an editor of *Early Education*, she is currently engaged in research on promoting literacy in early childhood settings and physical activity in the primary school.

Suzanne Manning is currently working on a doctorate focusing on a critical examination of early childhood education policy since 1989 and its effects on Playcentre in particular. She has been a member of Playcentre since 1994, when she joined with her 1 year old daughter. Since then she has been involved in the centre, the local Playcentre association, and national Playcentre Federation for five years, mostly helping to provide the Playcentre adult education programme.

Jan Mills is a 52 year old mother of three and recent ECE teaching degree graduate, who likens her passion and concern for Te Ao Maori to an 'awakening' which was fuelled while a first time tertiary student. She works at Olive Shoots Early Childhood Centre in West Auckland.

Sue Stover has been a senior lecturer at AUT University in Auckland since 2002. Her interest in early childhood education began as a Playcentre parent in the 1980s. She has recently completed a PhD on the history of free play in Aotearoa New Zealand. She is one of the editors of *Early Education*.

Maureen Woodhams is the co-president of the New Zealand Playcentre Federation. She has research interests in education policy, the experience of transitions between education settings, and practical and theoretical approaches to achieving high quality ECE. Maureen is a passionate advocate for empowering groups of parents to collectively provide high quality education for their young children. Maureen has a masters of education, graduate diploma of teaching (ECE) and the Playcentre Associations certificate. She is the author of practical books on providing block play and music in early childhood settings.

Early Education

Warm greetings from the Early Education subscriptions team at AUT!

2013 subscriptions to Early Education are now due.

The first issue of 2013 will be distributed in April, so we need your subscription as soon as possible. Remember to invite friends or colleagues to subscribe as well.

If there is no subscription form enclosed, please contact us on eejournal@aut.ac.nz for subscription information.

Thank you!