

Kindergartens Aotearoa

Tiki Atū background paper
January 2020

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Waiho i te toipoto, kua i te toira

In 2023, a new kindergarten entity will provide over 350 high quality ECE services nationwide. Kindergartens Aotearoa aims to grow the kindergarten movement, true to its philosophy and values. The association will focus on local services, reflecting their unique communities. Services will be well-supported with resources directed to excellence and innovation in teaching and learning. Kindergartens Aotearoa will be at the cutting-edge of curriculum delivery and a leader in public education.

Eight kindergarten associations¹ are involved in designing *Kindergartens Aotearoa*. The entity exists as a registered incorporated society.² By June this year our associations will be working collaboratively within and across three geographic regions. By June 2023, our intention is that *Kindergartens Aotearoa* will operate as a single entity with the participating associations formally becoming part of the new entity: the single largest ECE service provider in Aotearoa New Zealand.

We have a strong commitment to the kindergarten movement. We have a vision to grow kindergarten services in the interests of children and their whānau. We want children to participate in exceptional early childhood education (ECE). We want more children to experience what kindergarten has to offer. We want enduring community-based, not-for-profit, public ECE services to thrive in Aotearoa.

We want to reverse the overall downward trend in kindergarten enrolments which as independent autonomous associations we have so far failed to do. We believe if we remain operating as we do now that trend will continue - and we are not prepared to let that happen.

Kindergartens Aotearoa will be a service provider with the ability to directly affect change to meet government and community expectations. New and innovative services, influential local partnerships and collaborative endeavours are the hallmark of kindergarten. It is the service provider that establishes connections and directly meets the ongoing and changing needs and aspirations of communities.

It is each kindergarten, unique in its own community that delivers high quality early childhood education and that is where we believe our collective efforts, expertise and resource should go.

¹ Northern Auckland, Auckland, Tauranga, Taranaki, Napier, He Whānau Manaaki, Kidsfirst and South Otago kindergarten associations. Note: original group member Whanganui joined He Whānau Manaaki in 2019

² *Kindergartens Aotearoa* has been registered as a 'placeholder' incorporated society

Background

Kindergarten is iconic in Aotearoa New Zealand. It has been part of our kiwi culture for over 125 years. Our philosophy is based on the belief that children learn more profoundly through play than any other educational approach ‘enforcing their natural curiosity, the innocent joy and fun of play, the desire to learn and to be creative.’³ Our values of high quality education, affordability, accessibility and inclusiveness remain as strong today as they were in the 1800s: these define us as kindergarten.

Our kindergarten communities live in a changing world and our history tells the story of how we have adapted to meet new and different demands.

2020 offers the kindergarten movement a rare opportunity to continue that journey not only to meet the changing needs of families and whānau, but also to meet the government’s ambition to strengthen quality public education and to make sure Aotearoa New Zealand is the ‘best place to be a child and young person’.⁴

‘As a kindergarten movement, we are in a unique position to take the lead.’

This paper sets out the proposal to establish a new association - *Kindergartens Aotearoa* - bringing eight regional kindergarten associations together into one association to maximise our collective influence, expertise and resources. We propose the association come into effect in 2023.

We want to work with government as a provider of high quality public early childhood education (ECE), meeting their expectations to be innovative, to expand and grow ECE services, to show-case research-based teaching and learning services that reach into the early years of school, and to provide pedagogical leadership across the sector.

Communities are at the heart of what we do - children, their families and whānau. We want every child to experience kindergarten nestled in their community, and the highest quality teaching by passionate and skilled teachers and support staff, in rich and diverse learning environments.

*Tiki Atū*⁵ is the group of participating associations developing the proposal, building on the ‘one organisation’ project undertaken by New Zealand Kindergartens (NZK) in 2016 - 2018. Its terms of reference as attached as Annex A.

³ Bruce, T. (2012) Early childhood practice. Froebel today. Sage Publications. London. P xii

⁴ Prime Minister’s Wellbeing Strategy 2018

⁵ *Tiki Atū* means ‘to advance’

Kindergartens Aotearoa - why one entity?

We want every child to experience kindergarten - and that means growing the kindergarten movement and offering exceptional services.

Since 2005, kindergarten enrolments have declined by over 30 percent.⁶ Although individual associations have made changes to services to better meet communities' needs and to maintain enrolments, this has not shifted the trend. Falling enrolments means our services are less relevant to families in the 21st century. It means less funding, and less funding undermines quality and service viability.

Turning this around requires a concerted effort: maximising resources to ensure the services we currently offer remain relevant and well-supported, and ensure we have the capability to grow new and diverse services. We can't do that alone as separate associations.

We are unique in Aotearoa New Zealand. Our partnership with tangatawhenua determines our cultural context and obligations. We are part of the Pacific. We welcome refugee and migrant families from around the world. We have a diverse population across all income groups - and we have a widening poverty gap.

Although there are around 200,000 in early childhood education, we know the quality varies greatly and we know some children are 'missing out'. We know some children in services are disadvantaged and some are simply not safe.⁷

How the kindergarten movement responds to and reflects our social diversity and complexity, will determine its future.

Kindergartens Aotearoa has the potential to:

- future-proof kindergarten to withstand shifts and changes in government policy, population demographics and community expectations;
- lift and lead teaching and learning - developing and implementing a cohesive and consistent national strategy focusing on pedagogy and practice, and based on research;
- enhance professionalism and build our reputation as a leader in education and a service of choice;
- develop strong partnerships with national and local organisations to better support communities;
- establish and innovate new services to grow the kindergarten movement;
- reduce duplications and make more efficient use of government funding to focus on teaching and learning: increased 'buying power' and economies of scale;

'Since 2005, kindergarten enrolments have declined by over 30 percent. Although individual associations have made changes ... this has not shifted the trend.'

⁶ Ref: Education Counts, Ministry of Education website. In 2005, 45,000 children were enrolled in kindergarten. In 2018, there were 29,000 enrolments. While there were spikes in 2005 and 2007 which can be attributed to changes in government policy, the trend shows a steady decline over the 13 years which continues.

⁷ Reference - media, research and ERO reports

- facilitate greater opportunities to provide contracted services locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- respond to competition and increase influence as the largest single ECE service provider nationwide;
- be the public provider of high quality early childhood education.

Current structures limit progress

Working as separate, independent associations limits our ability to develop and implement a cohesive and coherent response to the changing needs of communities. It limits our ability to take up opportunities afforded by government policy, and local and regional developments. The differing sizes of associations mean some are more easily able to respond and adapt because they have the capability, capacity and connections in place. We want to make sure those opportunities can be realised in every community.

Associations have more in common than not. Kindergarten associations have the same statutory responsibilities, regulations and obligations. They receive the same government funding and they employ teachers covered by the same collective agreement. Associations do the same things including governance; administration, payroll, policy, maintenance, licensing requirements; seek sponsorship, grants and donations; curriculum - *Te Whāriki*, professional advice, learning and development.

Associations experience the same challenges: increasing financial pressures including meeting the costs of employment provisions, maintenance and utility costs; falling enrolments and increasing completion from other ECE providers; responding to changing community needs - diversity and complexities for families; supporting and maintaining high quality teaching and learning; and dealing with government policy changes.

‘We are ambitious for kindergarten and want more children and families to access the kindergarten experience. Our goal is to have at least 75% of children enrolled in ECE attending kindergarten by 2050.’

Separate regional associations struggle to meet these challenges. *Kindergartens Aotearoa* will have the collective capacity and capability to better anticipate and meet those challenges as well as take up the opportunities the government’s agenda affords us.

Efficiencies gained by reducing duplication and maximising resources creates consistency and means a greater focus on teaching and learning rather than on administration and compliance.

The vision is for a strong and enduring future for the kindergarten movement in Aotearoa New Zealand - ensuring equity and high quality in teaching and learning and meeting the needs and aspirations of young children, their families and whānau, and our communities.

We are ambitious for kindergarten and want more children and families to access the kindergarten experience. Our goal is to have at least 75% of children enrolled in ECE attending kindergarten by 2050.

Why now?

The time is right.

The government released its 10 year action plan 'He toanga te tamaiti: Every child a taonga - Early Learning Action Plan 2019 - 2029' in December 2019. The plan is underpinned by government's view of learners being the centre of education policy and its goals to remove barriers to participation, improve the quality of teaching, ensure conditions reflect 21st century learning, and strengthen quality public education.

The plan focuses on lifting the quality of services, supporting community-based services and increasing public provision of ECE. It enables collaboration and innovation. It is part of the wider reform of public education. The plan provides a window of opportunity for the kindergarten movement to innovate, lead and grow and we see *Kindergartens Aotearoa* well-positioned to do just that.

For a number of years now, kindergarten associations have talked about how we can 'do things differently' to meet the changing needs and expectations of communities. Most associations have changed the way kindergartens operate, and some have introduced new and complementary services.

As part of that conversation, associations have also talked about the way they are structured. They have explored whether a network of autonomous associations is the right model to meet our aspirations for the kindergarten movement and the challenges we face, and to take advantage of opportunities to grow services and provide leadership across the ECE sector.

Our conversation is not new - it features prominently in our history. There were over 70 regional associations in the 1970s - today there are 29 as a result of amalgamations over time. Since 2014, six associations have amalgamated to become larger associations.⁸

During the past four years, associations within the NZK network explored the idea of establishing a single organisation. While the network decided in 2018 the idea was a step too far, our associations did see the merit in establishing a new organisation and agreed to progress the idea. Within the NZK network, we collectively represent a third of the member associations but provide over two thirds of the ECE services. This proposal builds on the many discussions and detailed work undertaken for the 'one organisation' project and is the next iteration of the conversation.

⁸ North and South Taranaki associations joined together to become Kindergartens Taranaki in 2014; Wellington and Rimutaka associations became He Whānau Manaaki in 2014 and were joined by Whanganui in 2019; Central Otago amalgamated with Kidsfirst in 2015

Our 'kindergarten promise'

Our 'kindergarten promise' is to ensure the essence of kindergarten is embedded within the new association. The objectives of *Kindergartens Aotearoa*⁹ are to:

- ensure a kindergarten presence is nestled in local communities that is affordable, accessible, of high quality and inclusive and environmentally sustainable;
- operate under Te Tiriti o Waitangi;
- ensure genuine engagement with families and whānau;
- support an inclusive workforce reflective of their communities;
- connect across the social service sector including the wider education sector, health, housing and social development;
- respond and deliver on government and public goals;
- apply for and maintain charitable status under the Charities Act 2005.

The association will:

- 'do the right thing' by our communities': advocacy, actively building community, operating services that reflect communities - that are unique, responsive and 'local';
- be membership based, values driven and uphold democratic principles;
- value our people, be a good employer and model good practice;
- provide quality ECE services: 100% qualified teaching workforce, good ratios, engaging learning environments, comprehensive professional learning and development, continuous improvement;
- have expertise as an organisation, modelling best practice;
- be influential in shaping government policy.

It will also:

- ensure funds raised by kindergartens for a specific purpose are used for that purpose;
- honour association life members who will become life members of *Kindergartens Aotearoa*.

Kindergartens Aotearoa will be well-positioned and able to do more than we can do as individual associations now, to enhance and grow the kindergarten movement to secure the future.

⁹ As set out in the 'placeholder' constitution

Structure and functions

Children, family and whānau, and community will be at the centre of *Kindergartens Aotearoa*. What happens each day at ‘kindy’ is what kindergarten is all about so the kindergartens and services currently provided - and those in the future - will remain the focus of the new association.

Kindergartens Aotearoa will be a registered charity and incorporated society. There will be a kaitiaki council - *Te Kaitiaki* - guiding the process to ensure the kaupapa of this work remains strong. *Te Kaitiaki* will provide advice, support and guidance to the governance board and leadership team to ensure the organisation remains true to its vision, purpose and values.

There will be a governance board. Although the board will hold the constitutional powers, roles and functions, the voice of parents and staff will be prominent in the organisation. Specialist advisory and reference groups will contribute to achieving the strategic intent of *Kindergartens Aotearoa* providing fora for a range of voices rather than one or two in representative positions. There will be a national office and a regional presence.

Te Kaitiaki - the guardians *Te Kaitiaki* will include Māori, parents, staff, academics and other community leaders who will be elected, selected and/or appointed for a period of time as appropriate. It will meet nationally at least twice each year as a council, and regularly engage with the board and leadership of the organisation.

Governance board The governance board will comprise 8 - 10 members, primarily appointed although some positions will be elected with the facility co-opt or second members. People will become board members through an election or appointment process, or selection or nomination at hui or fono. Māori will be represented on the governance board. Community representatives and parents, including those with specific professional or governance experience, will also be on the board. The governance board will initially meet nationally, monthly - six weekly.

Advisory and reference groups Advisory and reference groups will be set up to support the board’s mahi. There may be some permanent groups such as the staff advisory group or the parent reference group, while others could be project based. The groups will meet at regular intervals as appropriate.

National leadership team A chief executive will be appointed and a senior leadership team (SLT) set up to meet the organisation’s constitutional objectives and legal obligations, and to implement the board’s strategic direction. Regional leadership will be part of the STL.

Regional teams

The regional team will comprise a leadership role, administrative and organisational roles, professional advisory services' roles, and community liaison roles. The regional teams will work directly with kindergartens and other ECE services operated by *Kindergartens Aotearoa*. They may also work with external ECE services to offer administrative or professional services.

Services

The network of current kindergartens and services offered by our associations will continue with new services joining the network over time.

The association will provide services both nationally and regionally. Annex B sets out the types of roles that will be provided, some of the same roles being provided at both levels. The key functions to be undertaken nationally will be broadly strategic and regionally, the functions will be operational.

Kindergartens Aotearoa will be a sizable organisation and the largest ECE service provider nationwide. As such it will bring together the systems, processes and resources of the associations involved. It will manage constitutional, operational, administrative, governance and employment matters, aligning and building current practice. It will have the capacity and capability to offer services to other ECE providers such as managing payroll, providing professional services to support teaching and learning, health and safety training, and managing property projects and maintenance. It will have the scale to procure goods and services such as utilities, car leases and technology which could also be offered to other ECE services.

Based on current settings and circumstances of participating associations,¹⁰ *Kindergartens Aotearoa* would:

- operate 375 ECE services catering for around 18,500 children, their families and whānau each day;
- manage a network of around 380 properties across seven of the 10 ministry regions and at least 16 local government authority regions;
- employ around 2,300 staff including some 120 administration and operational staff and a team of 40 advisory and specialist staff working with kindergarten and services' teaching teams and kindergarten communities;
- have an annual income of more than \$164m of which around \$147m (90%) is government funding, and annual expenditure of \$166m, of which around 84% is staffing costs;
- have an asset base of \$152 and liabilities of \$21m.

Although *Kindergartens Aotearoa* will be a single organisation it will be part of the wider kindergarten movement, the ECE sector and the education sector as a whole. Its interest is in securing a future for kindergarten and as such it will build relationships to support and work in collaboration with other associations and organisations within and beyond ECE and education to achieve that end.

¹⁰ Information presented with some caution given the financial years are not aligned across associations and some information is incomplete.

So, what's in this for ...

- *children, parents, caregivers, family and whānau*: more children experience high quality public ECE; new, innovative services provide broader support for diverse communities, social sector community hubs, stronger ties with neighbouring schools; kindergarten and other services are affordable and accessible in the community.
- *teachers, professional leaders and advisors*: are part of a wider, collaborative professional network, with a wide range of specialist support and guidance easily accessible; diverse opportunities to enhance and advance professionally within a broader career framework; accessible, diverse professional development including leadership programmes and research projects; multiple leadership opportunities to share and develop expertise, and being well supported to ensure practice remains current; well supported kindergartens and services to ensure the focus is on teaching and learning; influential in shaping curriculum, leadership and professional practice in ECE and across the profession.
- *non-teaching staff*: being part of a wider administrative or operational team and network, accessing a range of career opportunities within the organisation; specialist knowledge and expertise is respected, and people are well supported to ensure practice remains current; processes and systems are streamlined, and standards are consistent across all services; having confidence local services are well-positioned to meet future demands.
- *governance boards*: confidence in the capability and capacity of the organisation to meet current and future demands.
- *education and social sectors, iwi, community organisations, government and its agencies*: scope for a broader range of relationships locally, regionally and nationally; leading in the sector and the 'go to' body for advice; opportunities for national partnerships, ensuring a coherent and consistent approach to design and implementation, and developing new initiatives having one point of contact and streamlining ways of working across and within agency boundaries; a single interpretation and application of statutory requirements and obligations; being the single largest national community-based provider of ECE services with the capacity, capability and reputation to be the provider of public ECE.

Next steps

We propose to take sufficient time to come together as a single entity to ensure a successful transition while growing the kindergarten movement. Although 2023 is the nominated year for *Kindergartens Aotearoa* to take effect, this year participating associations will start to work together on a more formal basis across three regions: Tūarāki (north), Waengapū (central) and Taitonga (south). We have agreed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which sets out the commitments, expectations, protocols and behaviours of our associations to progress the next stage of work.

We have committed to:

- establishing *Kindergartens Aotearoa* by June 2023;
- establishing a Te Kaitiaki to guide the development of *Kindergartens Aotearoa* to ensure it remains true to its purpose and vision;
- developing a national strategy this year to grow and extend the kindergarten movement;
- working together regionally to advance common interests across teaching and learning, aligning organisational systems and processes, and building regional and national influence;
- allocating resources (time, people, financial) to meet agreed milestones and actions.

Our associations within each region will:

- support governance board chairpersons to meet as a regional team to align strategy and planning to meet the 2023 target of one entity;
- establish a leadership group to lead the regional response and development;
- design and implement a regional strategy to realise national strategic goals;
- establish a work programme to align structures, policies, processes and systems, and collaborate to build capacity and capability (teaching and learning, organisation and administration).

We have agreed protocols and behaviours - to:

- prioritise the work towards establishing *Kindergartens Aotearoa*;
- act in ways consistent with the principles underpinning the establishment and vision of *Kindergartens Aotearoa*;
- work collectively and collaboratively, and in a timely and effective way to facilitate progress to meet agreed milestones;
- consult each other prior to determining key national, regional and local decisions including those relating to resourcing (including staffing) and establishing new services;
- engage constructively with other associations and early childhood education services seeking to join *Kindergartens Aotearoa* or access its services;
- respect the confidential nature of information provided by participating associations.

We will continue to operate as independent, autonomous organisations until our associations constitutionally determine to wind up and become part of *Kindergartens Aotearoa*. This decision will be taken at some point prior to July 2023.

Work programme - collaboration

We are developing a detailed work programme to support the next phase. It will set out the timeframe to undertake a detailed risk analysis; investigate, align and implement systems, processes and policies; ideas for increased collaboration and development around teaching and learning, and new initiatives to grow and extend the kindergarten movement.

We will establish the strategic intent for *Kindergartens Aotearoa* and take time to plan how that intent is realised. The collective governance group and chief executive/general manager leadership group will maintain an overview of how associations are tracking towards agreed strategic objectives.

Associations within each region will work together with the leadership group determining which activities are best undertaken regionally in the first instance, or nationally. While there will be some activities and initiatives that are new to the collective, for the most part working collaboratively will be about doing business as usual in a more effective and efficient way, preparing the ground for a smooth transition to a new entity. Activities could include:

Regional			Regional or national
Teaching/learning	Administration	Operational	
PLD	Common accounts	Property management	IT platform
Appraisal	Payroll	Agency liaison	Leadership programme
Specialist curriculum	HR eg: recruitment	IT systems	Policies
Advisory eg: EI	Enrolment processes	Utilities and bank	Ricoh
Secondments	Grant applications	Contractors eg: cleaning	Office Max
Leadership	Storypark	New services	Utilities eg: mobiles
	Procurement	Playground safety	Fleet leases
		Marketing	National contracts
			SMS eg: Infocare
			Research
			New services

Some regions may advance more quickly to the end goal than others - the timing will be up to the participating organisation. Some activities may be national, particularly where all or most associations operate the same systems currently.

The participating association chief executives and general managers will collaborate to build relationships with iwi and wider communities, provide a shared regional response to government agencies and local authorities, and regional business connections. They will identify areas where teaching and non-teaching staff could collaborate to share resources and expertise. They will work to align or bring together systems such as technology solutions, a common set of financial accounts, and policies. They will meet together regularly and work as a collective within their region.

Participating governance board chairpersons will also meet as a regional team to align strategy and planning to meet the 2023 target of one entity as well as continue to grow the kindergarten movement across the region.

Staff across the associations will have the opportunity to work collaboratively: people doing similar work could work as a team such as payroll or accounts; and professional teams - senior teachers and advisors could work as a team to support teaching and learning, implement initiatives such as leadership development and research for example. Common approaches could be developed such as appraisal and recruitment.

Management and governance leadership while operating regionally, will come together across regions periodically to check progress towards the strategic goals. They will oversee and steer the process ensuring momentum is maintained and participating associations within their regions are actively progressing alignment and sharing approaches.

The participating associations will remain members of NZK, supporting the national organisation in its advocacy and representative role.

Non-participating associations will be welcome to join the formal regional network at any time, with the commitment to be part of the new entity by 2023.

‘Working in regions is a step towards establishing one entity, providing the opportunity for staff and parents of participating associations to experience the benefits of collaboration for themselves but more importantly, for their children and wider communities.’

These associations and other community-based ECE services and organisations will be able to access operational and professional services from the regional collective initially and then from the new entity.

Engaging with our communities

Over the coming months, we will spend time talking with staff, parents, caregivers and members about *Kindergartens Aotearoa*. Tiki Atū will continue to work through the issues to provide more detailed information about the structure, function and operation of the new association. We will work with NZEI Te Riu Roa and make sure associations that are not part of the group, are kept informed of progress.

Vision and purpose

The vision is for a strong and enduring future for the kindergarten movement in Aotearoa New Zealand - ensuring equity and high quality in teaching and learning and meeting the needs and aspirations of young children, their families and whānau, and our communities - annex A.

The purpose of a new entity is to ensure a kindergarten presence¹¹ nestled in local communities that is affordable, accessible, of high quality and inclusive, and environmentally sustainable. Operating under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, kindergarten will evidence genuine engagement with families and whānau, supporting a diverse workforce reflective of their communities. Kindergarten will be relevant and influential - the 'go to' early childhood education service with strong connections across the social sector including the wider education sector, health, housing and social development. It will have the ability to respond to and deliver on government and public goals.

Background

NZK has been in conversation with Early Childhood Leadership (ECL) associations and in particular, with the Auckland Kindergarten Association about the future of kindergarten. Following the NZK annual general meeting on 31 August 2018, NZK members discussed new ways of working as a national organisation. The NZK board acknowledged the desire for change and that members wanted to continue to work as a collective. Given the differing views and expectations of members and that there is no one view on a way forward, the NZK board agreed to facilitate a multi-faceted approach to explore different ways of operating and collaborating within the kindergarten movement. It determined to facilitate associations to have the conversations they want to have towards new models of operating. Initially the focus is on two ideas:

- exploring the possibilities around centralised and/or shared services;
- continuing conversations about a new kindergarten entity or model of operation with those associations wanting to pursue that idea.

It is the second of these ideas, that this working group has been established to progress.

Membership

Working groups have been set up to explore both ideas. NZK associations were asked whether they would like to join a group and if so, to advise their interest and representation. An invitation was also extended to ECL associations. Membership of this working group comprises representatives from the following associations.¹²

Auckland	He Whānau Manaaki	Kidsfirst	Napier	Northern Auckland
South Otago	Taranaki	Tauranga	Whanganui	

¹¹ A range of diverse services.

¹² Heretaunga KA has also expressed an interest in this group.

To manage the process and maintain momentum, the associations participating in this working group will be the foundation members of a new kindergarten entity. This does not exclude other associations from joining the working group or the new entity once established.

Context

We are mindful of the factors impacting children, families and whānau, our communities, and teaching and learning which underpin this work (annex B), the context ¹³ within which this conversation is taking place and the challenges and opportunities this affords the kindergarten movement.

Objective and scope

The objective of the working group is to design a new national kindergarten entity and the process kindergarten associations will need to initiate to become part of a new entity. The work relates to the associations involved in this initiative - not to all associations. Where boards are required to make decisions, it will be the boards of the associations represented on this group.

The working group will:

- design a new kindergarten entity including structure, functions and internal organisational relationships;
- develop and undertake a disclosure process to establish member associations' current staffing, property, financial and reputational profile;
- provide advice on the legal and constitutional obligations on and of associations (as these relate to the establishment of and transfer to a new entity);
- develop revenue and expenditure models for the out years;
- develop a timeframe and process to support associations transition to a new entity which will include transitioning staff, assets, systems, processes, and governance arrangements;
- design a consultation process for wider engagement with associations' members and staff;
- undertake a risk analysis;
- develop a communications strategy for the groups' member associations, other associations across the network, and for external stakeholders.

Timeframe

There will be a one-year timeframe to establish a new entity.

Costs

NZK will contribute funds and resourcing to the project and each foundation association participating in the working group will contribute toward the costs of this work on a fair and reasonable basis.

Support

The working group will be supported by the NZK national office and at times for specific expertise, by other personnel.

¹³ The government's Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy, and education work programme including the ECE strategic plan, review of Tomorrow's School and the education workforce strategy.

Confidentiality

While the nature of the work is public and will be reported to the NZK board and other associations as it progresses, the group must be assured that the ‘free and frank’ exchange of views is in confidence. The public record will be the agreed notes of meetings and any other material or information the group agrees to provide.

Purpose of the new entity

To ensure kindergarten is nestled in every community in Aotearoa New Zealand and kindergarten as a national movement is well-positioned to:

- effectively respond to shifts and changes in government policy, population demographics and community expectations;
- lift and lead teaching and learning - developing and implementing a cohesive and consistent national strategy focusing on pedagogy and practice, and based on research;
- enhance professionalism and build our reputation as a leader in education and a service of choice;
- reduce duplications and make more efficient use of government funding to focus on teaching and learning: increased ‘buying power’ and economies of scale;
- facilitate greater opportunities to provide contracted services locally, regionally, nationally and internationally;
- respond to competition and increase influence as the largest single ECE service provider nationwide: one brand, one voice;
- be the public provider of high-quality early childhood education.

We are ambitious for kindergarten and want more children and families to access the kindergarten experience. Our goal is to have at least 75% of children enrolled in ECE attending kindergarten by 2050.

Factors impacting children, families and whānau, our communities, and teaching and learning include:

- changing demographics: declining populations in many areas, growing refugee and migrant communities, diverse communities, transient populations, changing family and whānau dynamics and circumstances;
- more complex social issues: widening poverty gap, access to housing;
- uncontrolled growth of ECE services and increased competition;
- younger children attending services and children attending services for longer;
- focus on learning outcomes, increasing focus on quality teaching and learning, aging workforce;
- reduced funding and increased pressures, changed funding models, reduced affordability of services, pressure to maintain quality;
- a demanding government legislative agenda;
- increased focus on sustainability, cost of new builds, impact of technology.

Four central themes emerging - the need to:

- respond to increasing diversity and changing populations;
- respond to the increasing pressures on parents and whānau;
- make kindergarten environments and programmes more sustainable;
- manage the effects of government policies.

Functions at the national level could include:

Governance

- treaty obligations
- strategy
- PCBU

Advocacy

- political engagement, working with government agencies, initiatives
- representation
- stakeholder engagement - agencies, academic institutions, international organisations

Financial

- payroll, RS7
- fund-raising plan, sponsorships, grants

Legal

- license holder
- contracts
- compliance
- legislative requirements

Marketing

- media, communications

Property

- new builds - liaison, oversight
- maintenance
- utilities, cleaning

Teaching and learning

- professional learning and development programmes
- professional practices such as appraisal programmes, support for beginning teachers
- leadership programme

Organisation development

- policies and procedures
- research and development
- innovations, new types of services
- entrepreneurship

Business development

Procurement

- suppliers
- fleet cars
- technology

Health and safety

Human resources

- national workforce matters, supply, bargaining

Contracting

- management, administration, organisational
- professional
- regulatory such as playground checks

Functions provided regionally could include:

Organisation and administration

- ancillary services

Professional support

- teaching and learning, appraisal
- appointments, competency

Community liaison

- iwi
- agencies, organisations
- local suppliers
- media
- stakeholders

Health and safety