



## **Vision**

The leading body for childcare centre owners, committees and management; supporting and encouraging the provision of quality early childhood education and care services in New Zealand.

## **Mission**

We will achieve our vision by offering exceptional support and value to centre owners, committees and management; by ensuring their voices are heard and therefore influence early childhood education policy; and by demonstrating quality leadership across the sector.

## **Our Principles**

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) believes that:

1. centre managers, owners and governing committees should be encouraged and supported to continually improve their centres and to achieve success in their goals, whatever these may be
2. parents, whanau and caregivers have the right to choose the early childhood education service that meets their needs and to receive information that is accurate, fair and equitable to enable them to make that choice
3. the early childhood education sector should be free to reflect diversity in approach without being hindered by excessive and/or unnecessarily complicated Government regulation or interference
4. we will influence and lead the training, development and engagement of a world-class ECE Sector
5. centres must have a voice in and the opportunity to influence public policy and be part of the decision-making process
6. individual employers and staff have the right to negotiate their own employment arrangements and conditions
7. centres are able to be effectively represented at both the local and national level.

For full detail of the ECC's Philosophy, see the website: [www.ecc.org.nz](http://www.ecc.org.nz).

## The purpose of this plan

The intent of the Early Childhood Council Strategic Plan 2017 to 2022 is to provide for our members a clear direction and unity of purpose for everyone involved in the governance, management and delivery of services.

The ECC Strategic Plan is designed to:

- Provide guidance and direction to the CEO and National Executive Committee so it can plan and arrange its work to contribute to the achievement of strategic goals
- Influence the development of the ECC's annual budgets and the allocation of resources
- Provide a framework to measure and track our performance
- Communicate to our members, the ECE sector and Government, our goals for the next five years and our position as it relates to current and future early childhood education policy.

This document contains a summary of the programmes and actions identified by the elected members of the ECC National Executive Committee as being fundamental to the future of the organisation over the next five years. This document will be subject to annual review. Beneath this document sits the annual business plan and annual budget.

This version of our Strategic Plan has some sections removed for reasons of commercial sensitivity.

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## Environmental Context

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) is the largest representative body of licensed early childhood centres in New Zealand. As at May 2017, the ECC has over 1,000 member centres, or approximately 50% of the total licensed education and care centre market (adjusted for Best Start and Evolve Education Group, both of whom are not currently ECC members). Like the sector, our membership comprises approximately 70% privately-owned and 30% community-owned centres. These centres employ more than 9,000 staff, and provide early childhood education services to over 50,000 children. The ECC was formed in 1990 from the amalgamation of the Licensed Childcare Centres Federation and the Associated Childcare Council. The ECC was officially incorporated in 1991.

The ECC is largely funded by membership subscriptions. Membership is voluntary and is available to all licensed independent early childhood centres managed by community-owned or privately-owned groups or individuals. Our members' centres are diverse, ranging from those in small rural towns to those in large cities, from centres as small as 10 licensed places. The ECC is one of about 16 sector-representative organisations, some of which represent comparatively small, specialised philosophies such as Montessori and Rudolf Steiner. There is evidence of centres holding memberships with more than one representative organisation. The probable reason is that different organisations have different strengths and service offerings.

## Our Customer

Our customers are our members, who are independent early childhood education centres, represented by the centre owner, governance committee or manager

## Who are our stakeholders?

A stakeholder of the ECC is an individual or organisation that helps or enables the ECC to deliver its services to its customer. Stakeholders may be internal or external to the ECC. To prioritise our stakeholder engagement the following four categories have been defined to determine the communications activities that will be undertaken:

- **Inform** – we will tell stakeholders to increase their awareness and understanding, for example by providing e-newsletters, Swings & Roundabouts, etc.
- **Consult** – we will engage, listen to and respond.
- **Involve** – we are committed to consulting and working together where common ground exists.
- **Partner** – we value the collective power of a collaborative approach.

| Dimension | Type      | Stakeholder   | Partner, Inform                   |
|-----------|-----------|---|-----------------------------------|
| External  | Political | Minister of Education (and Associates)                        | Inform, consult, involve, partner |
|           |           | Other related Ministers                                       | Inform, consult                   |
|           |           | Members of the Education & Science Select Committee           | Inform, consult                   |
|           |           | Ministry of Education   | Inform, consult                   |
|           |           | Ministry of Social Development                                | Inform, consult                   |
|           |           | Other ministries, government departments and agencies         | Inform                            |
|           |           | National Party spokesperson on (early childhood) education    | Inform, consult, involve          |
|           |           | Act Spokesperson on (early childhood) education               | Inform, consult, involve          |
|           |           | Maori Party spokesperson on (early childhood) education       | Inform, consult, involve          |
|           |           | Labour Party spokesperson on (early childhood) education      | Inform, consult, involve          |
|           |           | Green Party spokesperson on (early childhood) education       | Inform, consult, involve          |
|           |           | New Zealand First spokesperson on (early childhood) education | Inform, consult, involve          |

| Dimension                                  | Type     | Stakeholder   | Partner, Inform                   |
|--|----------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  |          | The Opportunities Party spokesperson on (early childhood) education | Inform, consult, involve          |
|  |          | Education Council of New Zealand                                    | Inform, consult                   |
|  |          | New Zealand Qualifications Authority                                | Inform, consult                   |
|  |          | Education Review Office   | Inform, consult                   |
|  |          | Children's Commissioner   | Inform, consult                   |
|  | Economic | Bank  | Inform                            |
|  |          | General Suppliers   | Inform                            |
|  |          | Preferred Suppliers   | Inform, consult                   |
|  |          | Tertiary Institutions   | Inform, consult                   |
|  | Social   | AKA & EC Leadership   | Inform, consult, involve, partner |
|  |          | Barnados  | Inform                            |
|  |          | Christian Early Childhood Education Association of Aotearoa         | Inform, consult, partner          |
|  |          | ECC members   | Inform, consult, involve          |
|  |          | ECE Students  | Inform                            |
|  |          | Early Education Federation  | Inform                            |
|  |          | Best Start  | Inform                            |
|  |          | Evolve Education Group  | Inform                            |
|  |          | Kindercare  | Inform, consult, partner          |
|  |          | Te Kohanga Reo National Trust                                       | Inform                            |
|  |          | Media and Social Media  | Inform                            |
| Montessori Aotearoa New Zealand            |          | Inform, consult, partner  |                                   |
| Early Childhood New Zealand Te Rito Maioha |          | Inform  |                                   |
| NZ Educational Institute                   |          | Inform  |                                   |
| NZ Home-Based Association                  |          | Inform  |                                   |
| NZ Kindergartens                           | Inform   |   |                                   |

| Dimension | Type | Stakeholder   | Partner, Inform |
|-----------|------|---|-----------------|
|           |      | NZ Playcentre Federation                                    | Inform          |
|           |      | Other non-member centres                                    | Inform          |
|           |      | Parents   | Inform          |
|           |      | RE Provocations   | Inform          |
|           |      | Reggio Emilia Association of New Zealand                    | Inform          |
|           |      | Federation of Rudolf Steiner Waldorf Schools in New Zealand | Inform          |
|           |      | UNICEF  | Inform          |
|           |      | Every Child Counts  | Inform          |
|           |      | COMET   | Inform          |
|           |      | AUT University School of Education Te Kura Mātauranga       | Inform          |
|           |      | Bethlehem Tertiary Institute                                | Inform          |
|           |      | Eastern Institute of Technology                             | Inform          |
|           |      | Manukau Institute of Technology                             | Inform          |
|           |      | Massey University   | Inform          |
|           |      | New Zealand Tertiary College                                | Inform          |
|           |      | Open Polytechnic  | Inform          |
|           |      | Te Wānanga-o-Raukawa  | Inform          |
|           |      | Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi                             | Inform          |
|           |      | The University of Auckland Faculty of Education             | Inform          |
|           |      | The University of Waikato Faculty of Education              | Inform          |
|           |      | Unitec Institute of Technology                              | Inform          |
|           |      | University of Canterbury College of Education               | Inform          |
|           |      | University of Otago College of Education                    | Inform          |
|           |      | Victoria University of Wellington Faculty of Education      | Inform          |
|           |      | Waiariki Institute of Technology                            | Inform          |

| <b>Dimension</b> | <b>Type</b>   | <b>Stakeholder</b>                       | <b>Partner, Inform</b>            |
|------------------|---------------|--|-----------------------------------|
|                  |               | Whitireia Community Polytechnic          | Inform                            |
|                  |               | Wintec – Waikato Institute of Technology | Inform                            |
|                  | Technological | ECE software developers                  | Inform                            |
| Internal         |               | National Executive Committee members     | Involve, inform, consult, partner |
|                  |               | Staff                                    | Involve, inform, consult, partner |
|                  |               | Contractors                              | Involve, inform, consult, partner |

A separate Strategic Communications Plan will be developed to specifically address communication goals and tactics for these stakeholders.

## Goal One:

**To provide unique value to our members**

### How we will do this:

#### *We will enhance Value to our members by:*

- Proactively identify products or services that respond to the challenges and opportunities faced by our members to help them achieve greater success and that reflect ECC members' buying power
- Utilising technology to enhance members' experiences of their membership, such as through the ECC's website; and additional products like eemploy, the Blue Book on-line, the Centre Manager's CPD system, etc)
- Offering attractive, professional and popular events at discounted rates to members
- Offering members access to a range of preferred suppliers whose offerings create an advantage for ECC members over others in the sector
- Offering members connection to other, like-minded ECE organisations internationally
- Enhancing member's connection to the benefits of ECC membership by increasing awareness of the full range of membership benefits available

#### *We will promote our Growth by:*

- Growing the ECC Membership to over 55% of licensed education and care centres by 2018 so that the representative function of the ECC is strengthened and to provide resources to the ECC to increase its influence in the sector

## Goal Two:

**To provide relevance and leadership to the sector**

### How we will do this:

#### *We will enhance Value by*

- Ensuring our lobbying efforts are clear, robust, well-articulated, well-targeted and representative of our member's views
- Ensure our lobbying goals and efforts are supported by planned and intentional use of communication channels, such as media, social media opinion pieces and blogs, search engine boosting, etc
- Demonstrate that we participate in lobbying and policy design activities that matter to our members and that shape ECE policy and practices; and where relevant lead these activities
- Seeking to influence the opinions and actions of those who affect the way the ECE sector operates

## Goal Three:

**To shape early childhood education policy**

### How we will do this:

#### *We will promote our Growth by*

- Demonstrating an understanding of the issues and challenges facing our members and their centres
- Advocating for ECE policies that are balanced, evidence-based, fair and that wherever possible apply to the whole sector equally
- Advocating for a revised ECE funding model that reflects simplicity, transparency and a view of accountability that is agreed by centres; and that incentivises quality across the sector
- Promoting and undertaking relevant ECE research that supports the provision of high-quality, centre-based, teacher-led ECE services
- Continuing to communicate and position the ECC as the “go-to” sector specialist for our members

## Goal Four:

To drive professional development and recognised training with centres

### How we will do this:

#### *We will promote our Growth by*

- Establishing a unique model of professional development for centre managers
- Exploring the application of continuous quality improvement principles, techniques and models for centres with a view to future quality accreditation
- Providing a range of high-quality workshops, webinars and conference presenters
- Making steps to develop an ECC member PD structure for Centre Managers to follow
- Clearly outlining the benefits of CPD and supporting Centre Managers to recognise the value for their centre and personal growth.

## How do we know we are succeeding at our goals?

### Monitoring

A performance dashboard report will be presented to the ECC Executive by the CEO at each quarterly meeting, showing variances against expected progress and proposed remedial actions.

### Who we have consulted?

Members of the ECC National Executive Committee

ECC Chief Executive Officer

ECC Staff