

# Education Policy

## Vision

**All children and young people develop their skills and talents and learn how to use them for good in the world.**

## Values and Principles

Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood, primary and secondary education system must be consistent with the following values and principles:

- *Honour Te Tiriti o Waitangi*: Education should share the stories of our past and help us ground a sense of national identity in Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Māori should have control of and tino rangatiratanga over their education and have the right to contribute to the education of all New Zealanders, as through the mechanisms of Matike Mai.
- *Ecological Wisdom*: Education should nurture respectful relationships with the natural world and a sense of responsibility and reciprocity, including the protection of the taiao in line with tikanga Māori.
- *Social Responsibility*: Education should foster lifelong learning for all New Zealanders and nurture learners' dispositions and skills, to enable them to lead lives filled with hope, joy and satisfaction. It should meet the diverse needs of individuals as well as the needs of the whole community.
- *Appropriate Decision-Making*: Education should encourage and support people to take responsibility for their own learning and for helping others learn effectively.
- *Non-Violence*: Education should uphold children and young people's rights, celebrate diversity, and build skills for peaceful conflict resolution and cooperation.
- *Contribution*: Education should develop the skills needed to fully participate in society and to contribute innovatively and creatively to the work of creating a healthy and sustainable society.

## Summary

The Green Party supports an education system that fosters lifelong learning for tamariki, and develops the skills they need to participate in society as we transition to a zero carbon future that is sustainable, equitable and peaceful. Education must incorporate Te Tiriti o Waitangi. It must provide for diverse educational and cultural needs, and uphold the rights of children and young people. Teachers and other educational staff should be valued, with good pay and conditions. Schools and early childhood centres should be acknowledged as central to the wellbeing of our communities.

## Strategic Priorities

The Green Party's strategic goals include:

*"...inclusive education will be available to all."*

Actions in this policy that will help achieve this include:

- Trial alternative models of school governance that improve inclusivity and self-determination in education. (1.14)
- Provide advice and support on implementing the breadth of the National Curriculum in local contexts. (1.1)
- Resource the universal teaching of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in all public schools. (4.11)
- End classroom streaming or grouping by perceived ability, recognising this exacerbates inequality and is not supported by evidence for improved learning outcomes. (6.10)
- Ensure that all schools and early childhood services have policies, practices, resources and programmes to create a whole school culture that is inclusive, and supports the identification and elimination of prejudice, racism, bullying, intimidation, and violence. (9.1)
- Establish a unit within the Ministry of Education designed to support schools, and the education system in general, to listen and respond to the voices of children. (10.3)

## Connected Policies

[Children](#) and [Youth](#) must be supported to thrive at home and at school. Education at primary and secondary levels should prepare students for lifelong learning, including [Tertiary Education](#). All children should be able to experience inclusive education with appropriate support - see our [Kaupapa Māori](#), [Tagata Moana](#), [Disability](#) and [Rainbow](#) Policies, for example.

## Policy Positions

### 1. Expanding Quality Public Education

#### *Issues*

Children have a right to free, high quality education – but due to under-resourcing, not all children are receiving the opportunities they deserve.

#### *Actions*

- 1.1. Provide advice and support on implementing the breadth of the National Curriculum in local contexts.
- 1.2. Ensure that all public schools are fully funded to a level where high quality educational delivery is not dependent on the collection of fees (both domestic and international), private donations, fundraising, nor private investment.
- 1.3. Increase the operations grant to reflect the real cost to schools of educating children.
- 1.4. Ensure that schools have sufficient funding to enable all students to have the opportunity to participate in co-curricular learning experiences outside the classroom and local extracurricular activities.
- 1.5. Widen the teaching of practical and social life skills in primary and secondary schools.
- 1.6. Encourage teaching of civics education, including our parliamentary system, the law, human rights, Aotearoa New Zealand's place in the world, and an appreciation of other cultures.
- 1.7. Support the development of children's rights education within the curriculum.

- 1.8. Prohibit Public-Private Partnerships in the building and operating of schools.
- 1.9. Enable an incremental reduction in class sizes over time.
- 1.10. Require Education Review Office (ERO) reports to assess the service provided by schools for students with disabilities.
- 1.11. Ensure that the supply of resources, including skilled principals and teachers, is in accordance with identified needs.
- 1.12. Centrally fund all salaries for teachers, including relief teachers, and key support staff, such as Kaiarahi Te Reo.
- 1.13. Provide adequately trained staff and resources for recognised learning support programmes in numeracy and literacy.
- 1.14. Trial alternative models of school governance that improve inclusivity and self-determination in education.
- 1.15. Support students' right to participate in decisions relating to their learning, including in relation to in school operations.

## **2. Teachers and Teacher Education**

### *Issues*

A skilled teaching workforce is essential to quality education, but teachers are under-recognised, with low pay and burnout contributing to a stretched workforce.

### *Actions*

- 2.1. Improve the pay, job status and job security for staff in schools so that remuneration reflects the training undertaken, responsibilities of the roles, and supports career pathways.
- 2.2. Assess and address the need for increased staffing of schools in hard-to-staff areas and subjects.
- 2.3. Achieve and maintain pay parity for early childhood, primary and secondary educators, based on qualifications and responsibility.
- 2.4. Oppose arbitrary or subjective measures of performance influencing teacher pay rates, and support transparent salary bands and pay increments based on responsibilities and experience.
- 2.5. Centrally fund a wide-ranging body of quality professional development programmes to teachers that reflect the holistic nature of the curriculum, the pedagogical needs of teachers and which support all learning areas.
- 2.6. Relieve the administrative workload of teachers by increasing their non-contact time and simplifying non-teaching tasks.
- 2.7. Ensure that personal behaviour management, conflict resolution and inclusive education are taught in mandatory papers in all pre-service teacher education and training programmes and available as ongoing professional development.
- 2.8. Develop competencies for all staff to interact with learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Include in this cultural competencies as well as some training in pedagogies for teaching English for speakers of other languages.

- 2.9. Work towards standardising teacher training programmes across providers.
- 2.10. Ensure that robust Te Tiriti o Waitangi education is compulsory for all training and established teachers.
- 2.11. Support training for all staff to recognise and combat the impacts of unconscious bias, racism and other forms of discrimination.

### **3. Assessment**

#### *Issues*

Understanding the educational progress of students is important, but student wellbeing and achievement outcomes suffer when they are subject to arbitrary assessment standards.

#### *Actions*

- 3.1. Support schools to implement recommended changes to student assessment and take a collaborative approach to further reviews.
- 3.2. Work with teacher organisations to develop an assessment model or models that allow tracking of student progress against national data, to be used to inform further teaching and learning in partnership with students and their families.
- 3.3. Avoid using narrowly defined assessment criteria to define children's learning, especially in early childhood and primary levels.
- 3.4. Oppose the publication of league tables which rank schools on academic achievement

### **4. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori in Education**

#### *Issues*

Te Tiriti o Waitangi guarantees equality for Māori, but generations of harm caused by colonisation, its ongoing effects, and education and social policies that marginalise Māori have led to significant disparities between Māori and non-Māori learners.

#### *Actions*

- 4.1. Incorporate Te Tiriti o Waitangi through the education system and all levels of the curriculum, so that the mana of tamariki flourishes and is recognised in all education providers.
- 4.2. Work with Māori based organisations and representative groups to develop a programme of enhancing rangatiratanga in Māori education at all levels, and provide adequate resources to support this.
- 4.3. Ensure that education leads to an understanding of the importance of whenua while encouraging its return to Māori.
- 4.4. Work alongside Māori methods of teaching and learning to ensure Māori students are grounded in their culture and developing their skills and talents, by prioritising Te Ao Māori-based approaches across all kura while resourcing Māori educators.
- 4.5. Resource the full and effective implementation of the Te Kotahitanga programme to all secondary schools.
- 4.6. Resource the implementation and monitor the effectiveness of the Te Hurihanganui programme in primary schools.

- 4.7. Develop high quality kaupapa Māori teacher training and professional development, and provide specific incentives to encourage Māori teachers to train for and teach in kura, kōhanga reo, total immersion and bilingual schools to meet demand.
- 4.8. Implement strategies to rapidly increase the number of te reo Māori-speaking kaiako (teachers), such as targeting young te reo Māori speakers and graduates into student teacher education.
- 4.9. Support community based initiatives for Māori language education to allow non school-age learners and those who study at home an opportunity to learn te reo Māori.
- 4.10. Resource the decision-making abilities of hapū and iwi surrounding education, through Matike Mai.
- 4.11. Resource the universal teaching of te reo Māori and tikanga Māori in all public schools.
- 4.12. Integrate Mātauranga Māori into children's education.
- 4.13. Support Māori communities, whānau, hapū and iwi to work with schools so that:
  - 4.13.1. children's participation at kura and kōhanga reo is increased; and
  - 4.13.2. schools develop locally appropriate knowledge of tikanga Māori and teachers are supported to assist in developing cultural competencies in all schools and Early Childhood Services.
- 4.14. Increase funding for Māori-medium education, including kura kaupapa, kōhanga reo, and mainstream te reo immersion and bilingual learners, including funding for professional support of Māori-medium teachers..
- 4.15. Build the capacity of the Ministry of Education, ERO and education sector agencies to lift the performance of the education system for Māori students, and improve monitoring, evaluation and measuring of the system's progress towards goals designed by Māori.
- 4.16. Implement a programme to enable the teaching of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand, including Te Tiriti o Waitangi, at all curriculum levels, in order to reduce racism and foster a sense of identity in our communities.
- 4.17. Support and expand programmes that focus on Māori cultural activities, such as kapa haka.

## 5. Tagata Moana Education

### *Issues*

All students have a right to high quality education, yet Tagata Moana students are faced with persistent and significant disparities within the education system.

### *Actions*

- 5.1. Ensure that Tagata Moana learning is embedded throughout the New Zealand Curriculum, and is developed with the input of communities.
- 5.2. Ensure the Action Plan for Pacific Education is given full effect, and regularly revised based on the needs and priorities of Tagata Moana communities.
- 5.3. Increase teacher understandings and skills in culturally responsive pedagogies throughout the education sector.

- 5.4. Support a culturally appropriate environment so that extended families can be involved in their children's education, and ensure that families have access to the resources they need to support their children's learning.
- 5.5. Provide scholarships for Pacific language teachers at primary and secondary schools.
- 5.6. Ensure that the Government works with Tagata Moana teachers and leaders to secure the best educational outcomes for Tagata Moana children.
- 5.7. Promote the use, regeneration, and protection of Pasifika and heritage languages in the school environment.
- 5.8. Promote research aimed at improving education delivery and outcomes for Tagata Moana students, their parents, families and communities.

## **6. Diversity and Equity of Access**

### *Issues*

Students come from diverse lived experiences and backgrounds, but the education system is not set up to meet the access needs of every student.

### *Actions*

- 6.1. Allow for the flexibility to support and/or create some public or integrated schools designated 'special character', in partnership with communities – for example to provide for full immersion language teaching.
- 6.2. Support public schools that cater for particular learning, community, or cultural needs within society, while requiring that teachers at these schools have the same qualifications and registration requirements, and that the schools deliver the core curriculum and undergo ERO auditing.
- 6.3. Oppose systems which purport to promote educational choice while increasing entrenched inequalities, such as voucher systems for schools.
- 6.4. Increase the availability of teen parent support programmes.
- 6.5. Support and resource the retention of rural schools and the concept of neighbourhood primary schools.
- 6.6. Review school transport funding to provide better and safer transport services for rural learners, including urban and low decile areas where distance is a barrier.
- 6.7. Phase out state funding for independent (or private) schools and reinvest that into quality public education.
- 6.8. Support homeschooling families and identify ways to improve resources for home-based learners and ensure the Ministry of Education and ERO understand home schooling education philosophies and practices.
- 6.9. Support educational institutions that provide distance learning platforms and ensure they have the capacity to deliver quality education to their diverse students, including isolated and rural learners.
- 6.10. End classroom streaming or grouping by perceived ability, recognising this exacerbates inequality and is not supported by evidence for improved learning outcomes.

## **7. Transitional Education and Career Advice**

### *Issues*

In a world of constant change and technological innovation, the education system must be able to keep up and offer students a full range of post-school options to meet their own goals.

### *Actions*

- 7.1. Recognise the value of and support quality careers advice in schools, including by ensuring careers advisors are provided with comprehensive training.
- 7.2. Support the use of work-experience programmes within secondary schools to aid students' transition to the workplace and enable students to learn in communities.
- 7.3. Work to facilitate good relationships between schools, local businesses, and tertiary educators to ensure that students are aware of, and able to pursue, a wide range of post-school options.
- 7.4. Ensure that transitional programmes and school guidance counselling services are adequately funded to ensure the best outcome for students leaving school.

## **8. Environmental Awareness and Ecological Literacy**

### *Issues*

Environmental and ecological issues significantly impact the future of young people and generations to come – ecological wisdom should be embedded into the education system.

### *Actions*

- 8.1. Ensure Ecological Sustainability is specified as a key learning area in, and is embedded across, the New Zealand Curriculum.
- 8.2. Include the teaching of mātauranga Māori on whakapapa to the natural world within the core curriculum.
- 8.3. Expand the ERO Evaluation Indicators for School Reviews reporting so that they include Ecological Sustainability.
- 8.4. Ensure principles of sustainability, including a requirement for sustainability to be taken into account in the building and development of schools, are included in the Education Act.
- 8.5. Incorporate age-appropriate animal rights education within education on ecological literacy.
- 8.6. Support partnerships centred around environmental awareness and ecological literacy between schools, early childhood centres, home-based educators, community organisations, and local councils, through innovative programmes such as Enviro-schools.
- 8.7. Create productive and viable fruit and vegetable gardens at schools, and include the teaching of nutrition, basic cooking, gardening skills, and the origins and ecologically sustainable production of food within the core curriculum (see our [Food](#) policy).
- 8.8. Set ecology- and health-centred standards and guidelines for healthy food provided in schools (see our [Food](#) Policy).



## **9. A Positive School Culture**

### *Issues*

All children deserve a life free of violence and full of care and support, yet students are often exposed to physically, emotionally and mentally unsafe environments within the education system.

### *Actions*

- 9.1. Ensure that all schools and early childhood services have policies, practices, resources and programmes to create a whole school culture that is inclusive, and supports the identification and elimination of prejudice, racism, bullying, intimidation, and violence.
- 9.2. Support the implementation of whole-school restorative practices, by funding training, support, mentoring, and leadership in schools.
- 9.3. Ensure the use of an independent authority for appeals in the case of enrolment, stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions.
- 9.4. Provide a fund for school health/welfare services in a formula designed to meet identified needs within that school setting.
- 9.5. Provide free wholefood plant-based lunches for every public school child in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## **10. Including all Children**

### *Issues*

Every child has the right to dignity, self-worth, and the full development of their human potential. Students with diverse needs are confronted with impossible barriers in the education system, and the current resource and support levels are insufficient to meet the needs of every child.

### *Actions*

- 10.1. Ensure that Aotearoa New Zealand's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are met within education.
- 10.2. Include issues relating to inclusive education in the curriculum so that all students learn how to participate positively in public education.
- 10.3. Establish a unit within the Ministry of Education designed to support schools, and the education system in general, to listen and respond to the voices of children.
- 10.4. Ensure that all students have the option to access timely, free or low-cost professional assessment to determine their educational needs, and further ensure these students receive the support necessary to achieve at school.

### **A. Disabled People in Education**

- 10.5. Provide an enforceable right to inclusive education, in line with Articles 4 and 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- 10.6. Provide resources to schools and group special education to ensure the Government meets its obligations to children with additional learning support needs.

- 10.7. Allocate needs-based funding for learning support needs to schools based on the numbers of children with special education needs they have enrolled, and ensure that extra funding for students with the highest needs is sufficient.
- 10.8. Hold schools accountable for the way they use disability funding.
- 10.9. Fund new Learning Support Centres for disabled students within mainstream schools to meet demand.
- 10.10. Ensure that blind and low vision students have access to a full range of adaptive tools and reading options to support their learning, including assistive technology, screen readers, magnification and Braille instruction. Additionally, ensure provision of orientation and mobility instruction, as appropriate.
- 10.11. Ensure that deaf children, their teachers and their immediate peers are taught New Zealand Sign Language and other communication skills and techniques, as appropriate.

## **B. Rainbow students**

- 10.12. Create safe, inclusive and supportive educational environments for Rainbow students, including through adopting policies and practices to prevent and respond to bullying and that enable trans and non-binary students to fully express their gender.
- 10.13. Give parents of takatāpui, intersex, trans and non-binary children the tools they need to fully advocate for the rights, dignity and protection of their children.
- 10.14. Resource locally-led, accessible and culturally appropriate Rainbow spaces, including establishing Rainbow and diversity groups in schools.
- 10.15. Partner with Rainbow organisations to deliver high-quality comprehensive Rainbow diversity education, and teacher training and development.
- 10.16. Teach Rainbow histories and rights, including pre-colonial understandings of sexuality and gender, in the curriculum.
- 10.17. Provide students and workforce in healthcare and education with ongoing Rainbow competency training.

## **C. Other Specific Needs**

- 10.18. Support targeted funding for gifted and talented learners and the provision of additional professional development initiatives.
- 10.19. Encourage acceptance of accelerated learning in school if accelerated learning is determined to be in the best interests of the child.
- 10.20. Ensure all schools have adequate provision to meet the educational needs of their students for whom English is not their first language.
- 10.21. Ensure school staff are trained in the impact of child abuse, neglect and family violence on children and families, and develop the skills required to respond appropriately to signs of trauma, including behavioural issues.
- 10.22. Identify and address causes of gender-related disparities in school achievement.
- 10.23. Ensure that children and young people in care are supported in their education, and that schools work with Oranga Tamariki to better support them.
- 10.24. Ensure that international students receive a high standard of education, as well as student support that is appropriate for their cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

## **11. Schools as the Heart of the Community**

### *Issues*

The health and wellbeing of a child is a key determinant in educational success, yet vulnerable children and their families often face barriers in accessing vital health and social services.

### *Actions*

- 11.1. Support and resource the development of schools as community hubs, including resourcing relevant school staff.
- 11.2. Integrate community services, such as health/welfare and cultural services, within the school environment, where appropriate.
- 11.3. Actively participate in collaborations with other sectors, such as health and social services, in order to promote better outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.
- 11.4. Provide incentives for collaborative and co-operating ventures, including significant additional funding to schools, early childhood centres and kura.
- 11.5. Actively promote examples of successful educational collaborations.
- 11.6. Provide resources for facilities and schools that wish to establish themselves as Community Learning Centres.

## **12. Early Childhood Education**

### *Issues*

High quality early education is critical to a child's development, but families today are working longer hours for lower wages just to make ends meet and so struggle to access early childhood education.

### *Actions*

- 12.1. Support the target of 100% qualified staff in teacher-led Early Childhood Education centres, and provide the funding to support this.
- 12.2. Improve child to teacher ratios in Early Childhood Education, with a priority for under 3's.
- 12.3. Create models to share best-practice and professional development between centres, including reinstating the Centres of Innovation program.
- 12.4. Set maximum overall child numbers that no centre can expand beyond.
- 12.5. Establish support for networks of not-for-profit Early Childhood Education Centres to increase cooperation between nearby centres.
- 12.6. Encourage clustering of Early Childhood Education Centres with nearby Primary Schools to enhance the transition to school, including meetings between Early Childhood and New Entrants teachers.
- 12.7. Support a diversity of models for immersion learning in te reo Māori and Pacific languages, and resource these appropriately.
- 12.8. Ensure funding for 20 hours Early Childhood Education accurately reflects the cost to parents and centres, and is expanded to two year olds.

12.9. Support quality parent-led Early Childhood Centre models such as Playcentre.