

Just the Job Information Sheet

TeachNZ, Ministry of Education

Job title

Early Childhood Teacher

Job description

Early childhood teachers educate and care for children in the years before school. Early childhood teaching is challenging, fulfilling and fun. Teachers see immediate results as they support children to learn and develop in their formative years.

There are a number of differing education services they may work in such as kindergarten, early childhood centres, home-based services, kohanga reo and puna reo. While the majority of early childhood teachers work in English language services, Kohanga reo and Puna reo offer education and care in an environment that is immersed in Māori language and culture.

Qualifications required

To become qualified and registered as an early childhood education teacher you will need one of the following:

- Bachelor of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)
- Graduate Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education)
- Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood Education).

To become qualified as an early childhood teacher in a Māori immersion environment (Kohanga reo or Puna reo), you will need:

- *Tino Rangatiratanga Whakapakari Tohu* – the Kohanga reo qualification
OR
- Either *Poutuaronga Whakaakoranga* from Te Wananga o Raukawa, *Te Tohu Paetahi Ako Bachelor Teaching Early years* from Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi
OR
- *Bachelor of Teaching Early Childhood and Early Childhood Ki Taiao* from the University of Waikato

Please note that completing only the *Tino Rangatiratanga Whakapakari Tohu* does not lead to teacher registration with the NZ Teachers Council.

Secondary Education

To enter an early childhood teacher education programme, University Entrance (NCEA level 3) is required, although some diploma programmes have slightly lower entry requirements.

To enter study for a Māori immersion qualification you will need a level of fluency in te reo Māori that meets the requirements of your tertiary provider.

Please note that entry requirements will vary between teacher education providers.

Training on the job

- Some tertiary education providers offer centre-based programmes of study so early childhood teachers can study while working in ECE
- You complete practicums while you're studying, which is a great way to get a better understanding of the variety of ECE settings and philosophies
- Teachers must undertake relevant ongoing professional development and maintain professional practice. This can be done through internal or external courses, workshops and seminars. To find out more, visit the New Zealand Teachers Council website www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz.

Registration

You must also attain formal teacher registration from the NZ Teacher's Council. The teacher registration process is the same for early childhood, primary and secondary and you have to meet same teaching standards i.e. you do your teacher education qualification followed by provisional registration before you get your full registration. Generally this registration process takes two years full-time working as a teacher.

Training costs

If you study full-time toward your teacher education qualification, your fees for a year will range from \$3,700 – \$6,300* plus text books, other materials and expenses. Teaching qualifications vary in duration between one year full time (for post-Graduate students), to up to four years full time. Contact your teacher education provider for specific information about costs.

*As at 2011, this is subject to change.

Career path

Teachers have a wide range of professional development opportunities to develop their personal and professional skills – allowing them to go as far within the profession as they choose. ECE teachers can work their up into management roles such as head teacher, or into professional support/development roles.

Salary range

There is a wide variety of early childhood education services and remuneration varies greatly, salaries are either covered by a collective agreement, or they may be negotiated on an individual basis.

Teachers are offered attractive salary packages, compatible with their qualifications, and competitive with that of graduates in other fields. The pay structure also recognises and accommodates teachers who take on additional responsibilities.

Other careers this profession could lead to

You could:

- teach trainee teachers in tertiary institutions or teach in organisations at other levels across the community
- work in curriculum development, research or education policy with the Ministry of Education, or other local and central government agencies
- move into advisory roles such as school support or education review officer, advising teachers and schools
- work in professional development roles introducing the latest from research to existing teachers
- move into training and education roles in other sectors.

How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry

- A genuine desire and commitment to work with young children
- Volunteer work or experience working with children and their families is useful
- Proven leadership ability – ie coaching a sports team or experience working with young people or children can be an advantage
- Experience in teaching, social work, education is useful but not necessary
- Ability to relate well to a diverse range of people.

Other places to source information about this job

www.TeachNZ.govt.nz (TeachNZ offer scholarships to people studying to become teachers. Conditions apply)

www.careerservices.govt.nz

www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz

Also talking to current and recent student teachers and experienced teachers can be a great help in making a decision on whether teaching is for you.

Other relevant points

- Teaching is a profession that you can enter at different times in your life, move in and out of and work nationally or internationally
- The teaching lifestyle offers a range of benefits such as holidays, variety and autonomy
- TeachNZ offers a number of scholarships for study towards early childhood teaching qualifications. The scholarships are awarded to candidates who best meet the TeachNZ criteria, for more information go to www.TeachNZ.govt.nz
- A Puna reo is funded by the Ministry of Education as are other early childhood services. Puna reo differ from Kohanga reo which is responsible to and affiliated to the Te Kohanga Reo National Trust
- There is significant demand for qualified teachers who are able to speak te reo Māori
- There is significant demand for male teachers in the early childhood sector.

Early childhood teachers need to have:

- Teaching skills, knowledge of different teaching and learning strategies
- Knowledge of Te Whariki, the early childhood curriculum

- Good communication skills and the ability to build strong relationships with children and adults from a range of cultures
- Administration and report-writing skills
- Problem-solving and decision-making skills, together with strong organisational skills
- Knowledge of first aid.

Personal benefits - as an early childhood teacher you:

- Help to build the foundation of a child's ongoing learning and development
- Play a vital role in the lives of young children
- Build and strengthen relationships with children, their families and whānau
- Develop and apply specialist knowledge of child development to support children, their families and whānau.

As a teacher in Puna reo or Kohanga reo, you also make a significant contribution to develop and revitalise te reo and tikanga Māori.