Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme: Early Childhood Education

By Teachers, For Teachers

Val Podmore with Clare Wells

New Zealand Teachers Council
Te Pouherenga Kaiako o Aotearoa

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The Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme trialled the New Zealand Teachers Council's *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand*. Four sector-specific pilots were funded to investigate different models of support and development for mentor teachers and Provisionally Registered Teachers. The Pilot Programme ran over 2009 and 2010 and included an external evaluation. This report details findings from the early childhood education pilot.

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Foreword

The aim of the Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme initiated by the New Zealand Teachers Council (the Council) was to trial the *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand* (*Draft Guidelines*). The *Draft Guidelines* were developed to support and promote comprehensive induction and educative mentoring practices in schools, kura, and early childhood education (ECE) settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. They include key principles for effective induction and mentoring, essential components of a programme of support for Provisionally Registered Teachers (PRTs), and key skills, knowledge, and attributes required by mentor teachers.

The Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme involved four sector-specific pilots (ECE, primary–intermediate, secondary, and Māori medium) and an external evaluation. The Council chose to fund pilots that drew on the unique features of each setting and utilised or enhanced existing funding and support structures.

The Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme built on the Council's *Learning to Teach* research programme, which highlighted the important role mentor teachers have in supporting the learning of PRTs. The research showed that the support given to PRTs had been variable and that there was a lack of training and support provided for mentors. On the basis of this research, the Council chose to focus on shifting induction from technical and emotional support for PRTs to educative mentoring focusing on evidence of teachers practice and reciprocal learning conversations.

A steering group, chaired by Dr Lexi Grudnoff from the University of Auckland, guided the selection of the pilot programme contractors and provided feedback on the content of the sector-specific induction and mentoring pilot programmes and milestone reports. It also gave advice to the Council on implications of the findings of the pilot programmes and next steps.

Findings from the pilots and evaluation were used to finalise the *Draft Guidelines* and develop a national strategy to support its implementation.

The Council would like to thank everyone who has been involved in the Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme, in particular the teachers and professional leaders who enthusiastically embraced the pilot programmes in their schools, kura, and ECE settings. The Council is extremely grateful to the directors of the pilots and the evaluation team for the professionalism, energy, and rigour with which they approached this programme. They have all made a significant contribution to the teaching profession.

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Background and methodology

The early childhood education (ECE) induction and mentoring pilot programme developed by New Zealand Kindergartens Inc. Te Putahi Kura Puhou o Aotearoa (NZK) was one of four sector-specific pilot projects funded by the New Zealand Teachers Council (the Council). The ECE pilot aimed to:

- Trial the Council's *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand (Draft Guidelines)* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009).
- Trial models of support for Provisionally Registered Teacher (PRT) induction and mentoring.
- Establish models of successful induction and mentor teacher development, working with a draft version of the *Registered Teacher Criteria* finalised in late 2009 (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2010).
- Build a body of knowledge and resources to support the implementation of the *Draft Guidelines*.

The ECE pilot programme ran for one year. It included more than 100 mentors and PRTs from five kindergarten associations in three regional areas: Dunedin–Southland, Nelson, and Wellington–Ruahine. For the most part, participants worked in kindergartens. Mentors employed by Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/New Zealand Childcare Association (NZCA) joined the Wellington–Ruahine mentor group. In Nelson, teachers working in early childhood education and care centres were part of both the mentor and PRT groups. Senior kindergarten teachers had the leadership role in each of the regional areas, co-ordinating activities, facilitating workshops, supporting focus group interviews, and working alongside mentors and PRTs in their ECE centres and networks.

The pilot was overseen by a national advisory group comprising senior teachers, an independent advisor, representatives of NZK, NZCA, and New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa, and the researchers Val Podmore and Clare Wells. The advisory group met a number of times during the pilot to monitor progress, receive feedback, and discuss and explore the key issues and trends emerging from the research.

Workshops

The central feature of the ECE pilot was a series of workshops held throughout 2009: in February, May, July, and October. The mentors and PRTs came together in the first regional workshop and mostly met in their own networks thereafter. Teacher education providers and teachers from the schools sector also participated in some of the regional workshops. Between workshops, senior

teachers worked with the mentors and PRTs in their own regions to build on the outcomes of the workshops and to identify the issues and emerging themes that may be included for discussion and debate in the following workshop.

Research

The ECE pilot programme addressed the following key research question:

- How does the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme make a difference to the mentors' and PRTs' learning and teaching?

Key data generation tools included: observations of workshops (to record discussions and key themes and issues) and focus group interviews (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson, 2001; Stewart, Shandasani, & Rook, 2006). Ten mentors and 10 PRTs from each of the three regions took part in initial focus group meetings in February 2009; between seven and 10 of the same participants took part in each of the follow-up focus groups in July 2009. In addition, all workshop participants were invited to provide feedback and feedback was also sought from members of the pilot's national advisory group.

The findings summarised

The main findings of the ECE pilot affirm the value of the workshop series and provide insights on mentors' and PRTs' experiences with the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

Building relationships and making time to talk emerged as two critical elements of effective induction and mentoring pilot programmes. Open and honest communication, respecting the views of others, taking risks, and setting clear expectations are all key elements of a trust-based relationship. Goal setting, "courageous conversations", seeking and giving feedback, creativity, generational differences, and mentoring models were among the topics explored at the workshops. For mentors in particular, focusing on these aspects was important. While many mentors felt they had skills in these areas, it became evident as the pilot progressed that they needed to enhance them.

Mentors commented that the *Draft Guidelines* provide a useful focus for PRTs' work with mentors. They suggested some points of clarification in regard to the wording of the *Draft Guidelines*. Mentors found the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* useful when working with PRTs towards full registration.

Members of the ECE pilot advisory group reflected on the research findings and worked collectively to identify those attributes of the pilot programme that constitute success factors for induction and mentoring in ECE contexts. These attributes included:

- The pilot, developed in synchrony with early childhood values, was consistent with the principles of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) and included socio-cultural approaches and team collaboration.

- The ECE pilot programme was developed "by teachers, for teachers" and this contributed to increasing confidence among the participants.
- The pilot was fully supported by kindergarten employers and implemented across associations and geographical regions.
- A nationally-designed approach to regional workshops overseen by a central advisory group contributed to a consistent and sustainable process of induction and mentoring.
- The process emphasised the value of networking and taking time to "unpack" the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines* and the importance of shared understandings.
- The pilot programme included "exemplary" planned professional development for PRTs, "hooking teachers early in their careers" and influencing wider teaching teams. It "tapped into an energy for more".
- Collaboration was a major strength of the formalised and focused professional development opportunities offered to mentors and PRTs.
- The pilot programme as a whole and the workshops specifically delivered consistent quality amidst regional diversity.
- Participants focused on benefits for students through enhanced teaching and learning.

Sustainability and transferability

For ECE, barriers to participating in the pilot programme did not relate to differences in teaching and learning between services: the model developed for and through the ECE pilot programme was sufficiently robust to be relevant to teachers in any setting. The barriers were issues such as the appropriate use of available funds to support participation in an induction programme.

The ECE pilot model relied on bringing people together to share ideas and discuss issues, learn from and support each other, and more broadly to build a professional learning community both for mentors and PRTs. The collaborative model is transferable and the content of the workshops is relevant to mentors and PRTs across the education sector. The pilot experience indicted that issues mentors and PRTs have around expectations of the process and of their roles are the same across services.

Furthermore, the ECE pilot programme model includes a plan for professional development that focuses on supporting mentors and PRTs over a sustained period of time. This may require ECE services, and in particular early childhood education and care centres, to commit to sustained professional development rather than to "one off" opportunities, as is likely to be the case at present.

The sustainability of the induction and mentoring programme, particularly for teachers in education and care services, will rely on managers and committees being better informed about teacher registration, on funding to support participation, and on appropriate professional development programmes and opportunities being available. The removal of the target for 100% qualified and registered teachers in teacher-led services by 2012 and recent cuts to the Ministry of Education

professional development budget have the potential to undermine effective induction and mentoring programmes.

On the other hand, the sustainability of the induction and mentoring programme for kindergarten teachers is assured. NZK associations are committed to employing 100% qualified and registered teachers and will look for ways to realise that commitment.

Recommendations

Drawing on the research findings and informal feedback from mentors and PRTs, the advisory group made the following recommendations to support effective induction and mentoring programmes in the ECE sector.

Resource development

- That mentor and PRT development programmes focus on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines,* identifying teaching strategies against each (perhaps in the second or third workshop of a four-workshop series).
- That the Council clearly set out its expectations, both for content and process, and particularly for the level of documentation required.
- That the level and use of funding available to services to support the registration process is clarified.
- That the relationship between the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria,* the industrial professional standards, and teacher appraisal is clarified.
- That guidelines on entitlements and expectations (for mentors, PRTs, employers, and other teaching staff) are produced.
- That a package for employers be produced and sent to them when a PRT applies for registration.

Information distribution

- That more information on induction and mentoring be available via the internet.
- That these online resources are available for teacher education providers to pass to their students in their final year of study.
- That "Introduction to the profession" days be held for graduates during the post-exam time.
- That opportunities be identified to present the ECE pilot research findings and initiate discussion on induction and mentoring.
- That an annual PRTs' conference for teachers across the education sector be held nationally or regionally.
- That a meeting be held with teacher education providers to present the findings of the ECE pilot, highlighting the connections pre- and post-graduation and expectations of PRTs.

Policy areas

- That there be accountability for funding and monitoring of expenditure tagged to supporting PRTs to become fully registered.
- That the possibility of excluding teachers undertaking registration-related activities from the "staff hour count" policy requirements be explored.
- That mentors and PRTs be provided opportunities to undertake professional development.
- That the possibility that staff other than those employed as a registered teacher can maintain registration and therefore be available to be a mentor be explored.

1. Introduction

The early childhood education induction and mentoring pilot programme was a one-year programme built around a series of workshops for mentors and Provisionally Registered Teachers. This chapter details the vision, scope, and theoretical underpinnings of the pilot programme. It provides an overview of the components of the pilot, including specific information about the design and content of the workshops. Finally, each of the four workshop series is examined in detail and feedback from the mentors and PRTs regarding the final workshop and the pilot in general is presented.

Background

The early childhood education (ECE) induction and mentoring pilot programme developed by New Zealand Kindergartens Inc. Te Putahi Kura Puhou o Aotearoa (NZK) was one of four sector-specific pilot projects funded by the New Zealand Teachers Council (the Council). Separate induction and mentoring pilots were developed for the different education sectors: primary–intermediate, secondary, and Māori medium (New Zealand Teachers Council, Autumn 2009). An external evaluation of the effectiveness of the four induction and mentoring pilots was completed by MartinJenkins and Associates on contract to the Council.

The purpose of the Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme was to trial models of support for Provisionally Registered Teacher (PRT) induction and mentoring and the Council's *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand (Draft Guidelines)* (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009). It aimed to establish models of successful induction and mentor teacher development and to build a body of knowledge and resources to support the implementation of the *Draft Guidelines*. The ECE pilot worked with the *Draft Guidelines* and with a draft version of the Council's *Registered Teacher Criteria,* which was finalised in late 2009 after the ECE pilot programme was complete (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2010).

The *Draft Guidelines*, which sets out principles for effective induction practices and mentor teacher development, was developed with reference to the Council's *Learning to Teach* research (New Zealand Teachers Council, Autumn 2009). The *Learning to Teach* research (Aitken, Ferguson, McGrath, Piggot-Irvine, & Ritchie, 2008; Cameron, 2007; Cameron, Dingle, & Brooking, 2007) investigated induction practices in Aotearoa New Zealand.

A key feature of the ECE pilot programme was that mentors and PRTs from three regions across Aotearoa New Zealand (Dunedin–Southland, Nelson, and Wellington–Ruahine) took part in a series

of regional workshops throughout 2009. Mentors and PRTs were also supported through the pilot's online networks.

The ECE pilot: vision and scope

> Learning to be a teacher is a continuous career-long process. It builds on the teacher's life experiences, is focused through initial teacher education, developed during the provisional registration period, and extended throughout their teaching life. Continuing professional development is influenced by reflection on experiences with learners, by collaborating with colleagues and with parents and others in the community, by critical enquiry informed by research and other sources of new ideas and information. The best teaching brings about change in the learners as well as in the teachers themselves, welcomes challenges to accepted practice and is always seeking to progressively improve outcomes for learners. This is transformative teaching. (New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated, August 2008).

NZK developed the above description of teachers' learning to guide the development of its ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme. NZK's descriptive statement is consistent with the vision statements relating to effective induction and mentoring programmes for PRTs contained in the Council's draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the *Draft Guidelines*.

The criteria by which success in learning and teaching are judged are responsive to the changing expectations of the community and society as a whole. The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria,* which was developed with the benefit of wide consultation, is an example of this process. It sets out criteria for gaining and maintaining teacher registration. These criteria represent the expectations and goals for teaching and learning in Aotearoa New Zealand today and are the basis for assessing and supporting the progress and achievement of PRTs.

The ECE pilot programme was designed to take account of these criteria as well as the range of current national and international knowledge and thinking on how best to support teachers' continuing learning.

Specific planning for each aspect of the pilot programme was carried out with reference to the principles, vision, and essential components described in the *Draft Guidelines*. Recent research on induction and mentoring (Cameron et al., 2007) also informed the design and content of the regional workshops. These workshops were intended to provide PRTs with opportunities to engage with PRTs working in different contexts, to hear fresh ideas from colleagues in other ECE centres, and to stimulate teachers to reflect on their practice and how they could further develop professionally.

Teachers as learners

At every stage of their career, a teacher—whether provisionally registered, fully registered, or serving as a mentor or leader—is also a learner. A purpose of this pilot was to encourage and support

individual teachers to continue their own and others' learning in relation to society's changing expectations and the constant flow of new knowledge from different disciplines and sectors.

Early childhood education (ECE) in Aotearoa New Zealand is in a transition phase, working towards the goal of every teacher of young children being well qualified and fully registered. While this has always been the requirement for kindergarten teachers, they are challenged, as are teachers in primary and secondary schools, to continue to question and enhance their practice. NZK's regional associations, with their experience of systematic development and ongoing support for teachers at all stages of their careers, are well placed to support colleagues in other services where there has not been a long history of professional qualifications and registration.

A further purpose of this pilot programme was to draw effectively on the experience and expertise of the kindergarten associations and to utilise existing support structures within and across associations. The pilot set out to provide opportunities for networks of teachers and mentors from different services to come together in a supportive environment where they could learn from each other and from a range of sources of ideas and information.

By teachers, for teachers

The ECE pilot programme was developed by teachers, for teachers. A group comprising senior kindergarten teachers from across the regions was actively involved in developing the pilot proposal and seeing the pilot through to completion. NZK also established a national advisory group that met face-to-face and via teleconference to monitor the implementation of the pilot, provide feedback to the Council, share ideas, and contribute to planning the agendas for the mentor and PRT workshops.

Recognising that mentor teachers' professional development needed to be carefully planned and systematically enhanced, a further group of 16 senior teachers from the kindergarten associations involved in the pilot helped plan, organise, and facilitate the workshops, and supported the research and development component of the pilot. This distributed leadership helped ensure that professional leaders in different roles incorporated in their daily practice the learning gained through the pilot.

Kindergarten association experience

The pilot built on current experience. Aotearoa New Zealand's regional kindergarten associations were already providing a well-established and comprehensive structured support system for new teachers. It comprised professional development and site-based mentoring from experienced registered teachers, usually the head teacher with oversight by senior teachers, within the framework of requirements for full registration by the Council. The kindergarten associations' advice and guidance programmes had been developed over many years, changing over time as a result of ongoing review and new curriculum guidelines. The expectation was that this robust structure of site-based mentoring would continue and be further strengthened by new elements of the pilot, such as collaborative regional workshops for mentors and PRTs.

When this pilot began, several kindergarten associations were already running innovative professional development programmes. For example, some teachers were part of a "Teachers Registering Teachers" contract with the Nelson kindergarten association to provide mentoring in their own early childhood education and care centres. This programme continued under the pilot, with enhancements. This approach was congruent with one of the models of external mentoring recommended in current research (Aitken, Ferguson, McGrath, Piggot-Irvine, & Ritchie, 2008).

Kindergarten associations in the pilot

The five kindergarten associations in the pilot came from three regions: Dunedin–Southland, Nelson, and Wellington–Ruahine. Representing areas as different as isolated Fiordland and urban Porirua, they represented geographically and culturally diverse communities of learners and teachers. They also operated a mix of different kindergarten models beyond the traditional sessional organisation, including full-day and school-day ECE centres and ECE centres for under-two-year-olds.

Prior to the pilot, these associations had already demonstrated a commitment to exploring fresh ways to provide quality ECE. A number of their kindergartens were involved in the Ministry of Education Centre of Innovation project; an ECE centre in Invercargill was part of the Parent Support and Development Pilot Project; and the Nelson, Dunedin, and Southland associations were involved in the Early Childhood Information Communication Technology Professional Learning Project. Kindergarten associations' exploration of new ways to achieve quality ECE is underpinned by participation in research as well as an understanding of trends in the wider education sector and other disciplines, such as medicine and social work.

In developing the pilot programme, NZK anticipated that kindergarten associations would be able to offer insight into how ECE centres could become more culturally adaptable and how they could build collaborative networks in communities. ECE centres would be encouraged to share their unique experience. For example, some kindergartens in the Wellington region have established links with local marae and kohanga reo and with a'oga amata; some have high proportions of Pasifika, Asian, and Middle Eastern children. It was further expected that all PRTs could learn from those ECE centres in Wellington that have forged links with refugee and migrant services able to support children from immigrant and refugee backgrounds, as well as their families, and teachers. This rich mix of innovation and exploration provided a fertile ground in which the ECE induction and mentoring pilot could flourish to benefit the learning of teachers and ultimately of children.

Theoretical underpinnings

Research by Cameron (2007) was considered when reflecting on appropriate theoretical underpinnings for the pilot programme. A major consideration was to draw on theoretical perspectives relevant to early childhood teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand. The design of the research, and of the workshops themselves, drew on socio-cultural theoretical constructs relevant to making changes as a community of learners and inquirers (Rogoff, 1998; Wells, 2001, 2002).

Socio-cultural theories are embedded in the early childhood curriculum, *Te Whāriki (*Ministry of Education, 1996), and in current early childhood teacher education programmes, and underpin aspects of the knowledge requirements for graduates. Accordingly, the key theoretical constructs underpinning this pilot programme and the interwoven research are the socio-cultural notions of "communities of learners" (Rogoff, 1998) and "communities of inquiry" (Wells, 2001, 2002). Rogoff (1998, 2003) focuses on participation in a community of learners. Wells (2002, pp. 200-201, 209), who emphasises inquiry as an approach to learning and making changes, uses two metaphors as tools for thinking: "the improvable object" and the "spiral of knowing".

Objects can include a master plan (or, in this context, aspects of an induction and mentoring programme); a "spiral of knowing" is a tool for thinking and inquiry that integrates experience, information, knowledge building, and understanding, leading to action.

Participants in "communities of inquiry", who may be students, PRTs, teachers, mentors, or researchers, reflect on data and jointly inquire about meanings, actions, and changes (Wells, 2002, p. 209). Gordon Wells's work is fundamental to activity theory.

Pilot programme components for mentors

The ECE pilot programme provided high-quality collaborative learning and professional development for mentor teachers in five kindergarten associations across three regions: Dunedin–Southland, Nelson, and Wellington–Ruahine. Most of these mentors were head teachers in kindergartens, a number were senior teachers, and some, in Nelson, were contracted by the association specifically to mentor teachers in other early childhood education centres. The pilot accordingly aimed to recognise and disseminate a range of different models of mentoring to respond to the varying settings in which the mentors worked (Aitken et al., 2008).

Mentors employed by Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/New Zealand Childcare Association (NZCA) participated in the Wellington–Ruahine workshops. In time, and with further funding, the mentor network could also be extended to include mentors and PRTs from other services in each region, such as Barnardos and Ngā Kohanga Reo, and other kindergarten associations.

The pilot programme built on NZK experience. NZK has been active in its commitment to the full implementation of the ECE strategic plan *Pathways to the future: Ngā huarahi arataki* (Ministry of Education, 2002). This plan aims for the full registration of all regulated staff in teacher-led services by 2012. NZK continued to take a professional leadership role in working towards this aim during the pilot.

Kindergarten associations recognise the key role mentors have as professional leaders and this responsibility is recognised in the employment conditions for head teachers. Kindergarten associations have strong experience in developing the leadership roles of head teachers and senior teachers and in communicating a cohesive set of expectations for these roles. Mentor support and

development is now due for attention. These expectations are closely aligned with those in the *Draft Guidelines* which underpinned the ECE pilot.

For the purposes of the pilot programme, the term "mentor" was used to refer to a teacher responsible for mentoring a PRT and assessing and recommending them for full registration. In some settings, mentors are referred to as "tutor teachers" or "supervising teachers".

Regional mentor workshops

The regional mentor networks established in the pilot were based around catchment areas of a size to encourage access for participants. These networks promoted ongoing professional engagement across the services and with schools to create self-supporting learning communities. The provision of regional professional development and external support groups, particularly for mentors in the ECE sector, has been recommended in current research (Aitken et al., 2008).

Each mentor participated in the following regional workshops in 2009:

- a two-day regional workshop in February (which included at least one day with PRTs)
- a one-day regional workshop in May (on one of four days across the regions)
- a two-day national workshop/hui in July (held during the term break)
- a one-day regional workshop in October.

This schedule included one national-level workshop to allow mentors to engage more broadly with mentors from around the country and also to access resources that might otherwise be too costly to offer at regional-level meeting, such as academic speakers.

Intended benefits of the mentor workshops

The pilot provided release time for mentors to meet with other mentors, to enhance their mentoring skills, and to ensure an effective culture of collaborative and reflective practice in their team. The aim was to ensure mentors had the ongoing opportunity to learn to challenge and advance their own teaching practice in order to better support PRTs, contribute fully to the profession, and enhance the learning outcomes for children. It was expected that senior teachers and mentors would, as a result of the workshops and continuing feedback, be working with those they support in different and more effective ways.

The NZK made reference to the Council's *Draft Guidelines* in the detailed planning for each workshop.

Consistency

The pilot was expected to facilitate greater consistency of induction and mentoring programmes and in PRT assessment for registration across different regional associations, while being adaptable enough to meet the needs of different sectors and individual teachers.

The pilot provided a mechanism for mentors across regions to moderate the way they use evidence and make judgements about the progress of teachers towards meeting the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria,* thus increasing their ability to achieve consistency of standards for full registration.

Mentoring skills

The workshops were also structured to develop specific mentoring skills. Mentors do not automatically have the skills needed to effectively support PRTs (National Centre for Research on Teacher Learning, 1995). The workshops thus provided opportunities for mentors to experience a "culture of mentoring" where they could learn new skills and work with other mentors to improve their teaching and practices (National Centre for Research on Teacher Learning, 1995).

Mentors in the pilot were involved in selecting the mentoring skills and issues that would be addressed during the workshops. The skills selected included those listed in Table 1.

Table 1: Mentoring skills addressed in the workshops

Mentoring skill	Examples of learning
PRT assessment	• Analysing problems • Collecting and using data to inform teaching (Achinstein & Villar, 2004) • Providing formal reports and written feedback to PRTs • Using professional judgement to ensure more consistent assessment of the progress of PRTs towards meeting the criteria for full registration
Coaching	• Establishing professional conversations (Timperley, 2001) • Giving critical and constructive feedback • Setting expectations and goals • Developing interpersonal skills • Developing methods to document professional conversations • Encouraging the PRT to take increasing responsibility for identifying the next steps in their own professional learning
Self-reflection	• Matching the inquiry processes expected of PRTs with their own professional practice and learning, always with the goal of achieving the best teaching and outcomes for children

Working with primary schools

Enhancing collaboration across sectors was also part of the pilot. The *New Zealand Curriculum* (Ministry of Education, 2007) follows on from *Te Whāriki*, the early childhood curriculum (Ministry of Education 1996). As schools worked toward the full implementation of the *New Zealand Curriculum* in 2010, it was clear that they would benefit from shared professional development with

early childhood teachers. Similarly, early childhood teachers would be better equipped to support the learning of the children they teach if they understood what would be expected of them in the school sector.

Since mentors in the early childhood sector would be able to influence this cross–sectoral sharing for the ultimate benefit of learning outcomes for children, mentors from primary schools in the pilot regions were invited to participate at least once in the year. Teacher mentors were involved in the Dunedin–Southland area pilot, primarily to present a school's view of induction and mentoring rather than to participate alongside participants in the pilot.

Draft Registered Teacher Criteria

Besides supporting the development of mentoring skills, the pilot also gave mentors the opportunity to focus on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and consider how it could form a useful framework for their work with PRTs and other teachers in their kindergartens and ECE centres. They also looked at the best ways to use the kindergarten teachers' professional standards in their employment agreements, along with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, as tools for achieving greater consistency of quality teaching. Feedback on both the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the *Draft Guidelines* was provided to the Council.

Online network for mentors

The pilot programme established an online network for participating mentors through the NZK website. It was intended to support mentors to extend the scope of their collaborative networks, learn from others' experience, share problems, and get feedback promptly. Mentors also benefited from acquiring skills in online learning and the use of technology as a source of information to enhance their professional development.

Pilot programme components for PRTs

The ECE pilot programme provided structured induction experiences for PRTs in their first and second years of teaching. It focused on three regions: Dunedin–Southland, Nelson, and Wellington–Ruahine.

The expectation was that the PRT participants would generally be employed in kindergartens, but it was also intended that other ECE services would be involved wherever they had a contract with a kindergarten association for provision of mentoring in their own ECE centre, as was the case through "Teachers Registering Teachers" in the Nelson area. The central element of the pilot was the establishment of regional collaborative networks to provide mentors and PRTs with access to a wider community of learning and support beyond their own ECE centre.

Regional PRT workshops

The PRTs participated in regional face-to-face workshops four times during 2009. This process was aligned with Aitken et al.'s recommendations for external support groups for professional development for early childhood PRTs. Collaboration among colleagues and increasing the "family of support" to extend beyond the mentor and PRT alone are exemplary practices for teacher induction (Aitken et al., 2008).

Each PRT participated in the following PRT network workshops in 2009:

- a two-day regional workshop in February (which included at least one day with mentors)
- a one-day regional workshop in May (on one of four days across the regions)
- a one-day regional workshop in July (held during the term break)
- a one-day regional workshop in October.

A group of 10 PRTs from each region also participated in a focus group interview for the qualitative research and development study.

These intensive workshops allowed each PRT to discuss their current professional practice and thinking with PRTs from other ECE centres and see this within the context of their own ECE centre. PRTs also had the opportunity to ask questions and learn what other PRTs were doing.

The professional learning experienced during these network meeting days was followed through with enriched mentoring programmes within the PRTs' own ECE centres. Details of the participants, components, and implementation of the regional workshops for PRTs are provided later in this chapter, and observations of the discussions that took place are described in Chapter 3 (Results).

Intended benefits of the PRT workshops

The NZK anticipated that the series of regional workshops would ultimately help PRTs find ways to access information, advice, and support from people in their wider community. The workshops provided PRTs with peer support in a wider learning community to enable them to explore new ideas, learn from others across their region, and focus in more depth on their professional learning.

Continuity with teacher training

Lecturers from the University of Otago College of Education were included in the May workshop for PRTs in Dunedin–Southland in order to support continuity between the PRTs' initial teacher education and the process towards full registration. It was anticipated that an understanding of the links between pedagogical theories and their current practice would enhance the PRT's continuing learning during employment as qualified teachers (Anthony, Kane, et al., 2008).

ECE centre visits

It was envisaged that PRTs' visits to other ECE centres, a current requirement of the registration process, would be better informed and more likely to be useful when PRTs were already engaging with some of these teachers and could select and focus their visits to make the best use of the opportunity. Such professional learning opportunities, drawing on a diverse range of ECE centres and focused on the PRT's everyday teaching practice, could be enhanced if the PRT knew what other PRTs had found helpful.

Teaching quality

An important intended benefit of the workshops was to enhance teaching quality across the regions. Accordingly, PRTs were given the opportunity to engage in a professional context with other PRTs and supported to take responsibility for their own continued learning. Mentors engaged with PRTs in the workshops so that both groups might benefit from having a common framework for thinking about their professional learning. PRTs, along with mentors, considered what evidence would be required for formative and summative assessment of their progress towards meeting their goals and full registration. In this way, PRTs could develop a greater understanding of the process of assessment for full registration and of ways to make the best use of it for further learning.

Draft Registered Teacher Criteria

The workshops also gave PRTs an opportunity to become familiar with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and to relate its requirements to their own everyday practice and their experience with the learners they teach, with their own learning programmes, and with teaching colleagues, support staff and other professionals, families/whānau, other agencies, and people in the community.

Online network for PRTs

Beyond the workshops, the pilot also gave PRTs the chance to participate in online dialogue with other PRTs participating in the pilot, allowing them to raise questions as they occurred and to receive feedback promptly. This online community was built through the NZK website, alongside a separate community for mentors involved in the pilot programme.

The workshop programme

The ECE pilot programme began at the end of 2008, with the first of the four workshop series held in February 2009. There were 16 workshops in total. Mentor and PRT workshops were held separately, except for the February series, when mentors and PRTs spent at least one day of the two-day workshop together. The two-day national workshop/hui for mentors, held in July, provided the first and only opportunity for mentors to meet together as a national group. It was an important opportunity for mentors to network and they appreciated being together for an extended period to exchange ideas, explore issues, share resources, and focus on their role as mentor.

The main focus of the workshops was on acquiring skills and practical knowledge, understanding expectations, and building relationships.

How the workshops were designed

The workshop programmes were designed, by the advisory group, to reflect the key areas of knowledge, skills, and dispositions set out in the *Draft Guidelines,* as well as its suggested content for development programmes. However, as the ECE pilot was for one year, it was not possible to examine and explore all aspects of the *Draft Guidelines*.

As the pilot progressed, subsequent workshop programmes reflected issues emerging from previous workshops and feedback from participants, the preliminary research findings, and insight from senior teachers and others in professional roles about the needs of the mentors and PRTs with whom they work. The advisory group brought together this knowledge and information, along with their own understandings about mentoring, to inform the next stage of the pilot.

While the advisory group identified the content for the particular workshop series as a whole, each region's advisory group members consulted with senior teachers in their area to plan their workshop in a way that best suited the participants and met their particular needs. Drawing on each of these elements gave the advisory group confidence that what was being provided to mentors and PRTs was appropriate, relevant, and timely.

For the PRT workshops, the advisory group drew on the expectations of PRTs involved in the pilot to develop workshop programmes that addressed issues and skills of importance to them. These induction and mentoring expectations included that PRTs:

- are a valued and respected member of the teaching team
- have a trusted relationship with their mentor
- can expect help and support from mentors and other teachers
- are clear about the expectations of the induction programme (both its content and timeframe)
- will work *with* the mentor and other members of the teaching team
- will have the time and resources to be able to confidently participate in the programme.

Workshop content

A central factor present in each workshop was a discussion of the importance of building and maintaining a high-trust relationship between the mentor and PRT. Providing opportunities for mentors and PRTs to discuss what a high-trust relationship looks like and to develop skills and knowledge to assist in building such relationships was a key element of the pilot programme.

The workshops covered a range of other topics, as follows:

- The February workshops introduced the pilot, the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria,* and the *Draft Guidelines.* They clarified expectations and provided opportunities to establish and

build networks, discuss teaching practice, and learn about goal setting and providing constructive feedback. The mentor workshops also focused on the skills and attributes of mentors and their roles and responsibilities.

- The mentors' May workshops covered initiating conversations on professional practice, the expectations of teachers, and effective mentoring through observations, written reports, and feedback. The PRT workshops built on the February workshops to reinforce skills in asking for and giving feedback and goal setting and also discussed the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, the pilot's online network, and sharing resources, including evidence.

- The July mentors' national workshop/hui focused on developing mentor's understanding of their role as well as providing practical skills and resources. Topics discussed included managing difficult conversations, understanding the *Draft Guidelines*, the theory and practice of the role of mentor, and understanding generational differences. Three newly registered teachers talked about their experiences and expectations of mentoring, highlighting the importance of good relationships, effective communication, good planning, and feedback.

- The PRT workshops in July continued to build on the previous workshops, with a focus on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. PRTs "unpacked" the different criteria to understand their meaning, explored what they would look in practice, and related them to goal setting. They also discussed courageous or difficult conversations, sharing resources and ideas, reflective practice, and the pilot's online network. Finally, PRTs considered what documentation and evidence they should collect to show their progress towards full registration.

- The final series of workshops in October focused on putting the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines* into practice. They considered what suitable evidence looks like and how mentors and PRTs can reflect on their practice. The workshops recapped the pilot to date and concluded with inspirational speakers.

Success factors

Three factors crucial to the success of the pilot were:

- building on participant's feedback from the previous workshops
- having whole-day workshops as part of a comprehensive development programme over a period of time
- having sufficient time between workshops.

These factors together allowed the advisory group to ensure the identified needs of each regional group of mentors and PRTs were met in a relevant and timely way at each workshop. It also allowed teachers to practice newly acquired skills, for example, before coming together for discussion at the next workshop. The advisory group determined the length of time between workshops to ensure momentum was maintained while participants had sufficient time to reflect on new information and understandings and adapt their practice.

February workshops

The first series of workshops were held during February 2009. The advisory group had originally planned that the workshops would be held over three days, with the mentors and PRTs having two days in their own groups and one day together. However, the advisory group eventually decided to hold the workshops over two consecutive days, except in Wellington–Ruahine where the PRTs attended one-day meetings earlier in the year and were present only for the second day of the February workshop. Table 2 presents the dates of the February workshops and numbers attending.

Table 2: Workshop attendance: February 2009

Region	Date	Location	Attendance	
			Mentors	**PRTs**
Dunedin–Southland	23-24 February, 2009	Dunedin	14	14
Nelson	20-21 February, 2009	Nelson	17	27
Wellington–Ruahine	27-28 February, 2009	Paraparaumu	20	19

Each of the February workshops was also attended by the researcher (Val Podmore) who identified the key themes and issues emerging from the discussion and held the first of the research focus groups. Ruth Mansell, independent consultant, Gillian Dodson of NZCA, and Clare Wells of NZK attended the Wellington–Ruahine workshop with the mentors on the first day, and Clare Wells presented information on the pilot to the group.

The workshops covered a number of topics, informed by the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines*, and including a focus on the dispositions and skills of mentors and PRTs, goal setting, and documentation. While each programme covered common topics identified by the advisory group, all were presented differently, reflecting the local culture of the association, the style of the professional leaders, and the needs of participants.

The programmes were facilitated by advisory group members and senior teachers. Senior teachers shared responsibility for preparing resources, presenting sections of the programme, and recording discussions. Building trusted relationships was a key theme running through the workshops, with opportunities for people to spend time together sharing and debating issues and ideas. The mentors and PRTs spent time together and in their own groups.

Keynote speakers and facilitators participated in each workshop. Kirsty Prince of Learning and Professional Development Ltd. facilitated day two of the Dunedin–Southland workshop covering learning styles, perspective-based thinking, having conversations, giving feedback, reflective questioning, effecting change, communication challenges, and conflict resolution. In Nelson, Liz Depree and Karen Hayward of Interlead Consultants led a session entitled "Creating a community of learners". They explored the differences between andragogy and pedagogy and discussed establishing new practice, effecting change, mentoring, and feedback. Kate Thornton from Victoria University was the keynote speaker at the Wellington–Ruahine mentor's workshop. She covered rewards and challenges of mentoring, mentoring experiences, and mentoring models and skills, and

sought to raise participants understanding of mentoring. These workshop sessions stimulated useful, focused discussions, which are summarised in the Results section (Chapter 3) of this report.

May workshops

A total 54 mentors and 52 PRTs participated in the six one-day workshops during May, including two of the four NZCA mentors who are part of the Wellington–Ruahine group. Mentors and PRTs met separately. Table 3 presents the dates of the May workshops and numbers attending.

Table 3: Workshop attendance: May 2009

Region	Date	Location	Attendance
Dunedin–Southland	5 May, 2009	Invercargill	14 PRTs
	6 May, 2009	Invercargill	13 mentors
Nelson	2 May, 2009	Nelson	21 PRTs
	8 May, 2009	Nelson	18 mentors
Wellington–Ruahine	6 May, 2009	Paraparaumu	17 PRTs
	8 May, 2009	Paraparaumu	23 mentors

In addition to the attendees accounted for above, two mentors new to the registration process and three PRTs attended the Dunedin–Southland workshop. They were funded by the Southland Kindergarten Association.

The workshop programmes were developed by the advisory group members and senior teachers in each area, drawing on the overall objectives of the pilot, the topics identified by the advisory group as timely for this second workshop, and PRTs' and mentors' feedback on the first workshop. Participants were asked to prepare for the workshop and bring copies of reference materials such as the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines*, *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) and *Quality in Action (*Ministry of Education, 1998)*,* and association induction or mentoring kits, as well as examples of their portfolios.

Mentor workshops

Advisory group members took a key role in the mentor's workshops, alongside external presenters: Kerry Hawkins, principal of Waverley School, Invercargill was a guest speaker at the Dunedin–Southland workshop, while Lyn James, of Manawatu Counselling Consultants, spoke at the Wellington–Ruahine workshop on initiating conversations on professional practice.

The mentor workshops featured the following common programme elements: the role of the mentor; facilitating professional discussions; effective mentoring, including observations, written reports, and giving feedback; and online discussion via the pilot's online mentors' network.

Other topics covered in one or more of the workshops included personality styles and body language, and sharing resources.

The mentors spent time in the workshop "unpacking" and discussing the *Draft Guidelines*. In particular, mentors discussed what would be evident in practice when the *Draft Guidelines* were being met. Detailed feedback on the *Draft Guidelines* from the May workshops was collated and forwarded to the Council in a milestone report. Some examples are set out in Table 4.

Table 4: Feedback on the *Draft Guidelines*: Mentor workshops, May 2009

Draft Guidelines reference	Recommendations
Section 6.2: The role of the mentor teacher includes providing support to the PRT in their role as a new teacher	• Build registration into the culture of the team and the ECE centre • Negotiate what sort or level of support the PRT would like • Assist PRTs to find a starting point • Provide opportunities to network with other PRTs
Section 6.2: The role of the mentor teacher includes observing the teacher, providing feedback against specific criteria, and facilitating the teacher's ability to reflect on that feedback	• Set expectations as a team about receiving authentic and relevant feedback • Help PRTs find or develop strategies for accepting critical feedback
Section 6.2: The role of the mentor teacher includes guiding the teacher towards professional leadership practices	• Adopt a distributed-leadership model, where mentors share the workload and delegate with appropriate support, and PRTs take responsibility and use their initiative • Ensure that the mechanics are in place to allow for shared leadership: agendas are owned by the team; role modelling; taking part in or facilitating discussion
Section 7.1 (1): Mentors know about teachers, teaching, and teacher learning	Mentors: • have knowledge of current philosophies and practices • talk to their PRT to find out how they learn most effectively • allow the team to catch the vision and run with it • have pedagogical understanding of the mentor role (developing self-learners and problem solvers) To carry this out, mentors are supported with: • leadership and mentoring training • senior teacher/professional service manager support and feedback • an external support network they can draw on when needed
Section 7.1 (2): Mentors know about learners and learning	Mentors: • work with the same group of children as their PRT, building relationships with family/whānau, getting to know the their cultural backgrounds, and connecting to the community • demonstrate knowledge of research into learning: pedagogical content To carry this out, mentors: • collect and interpret evidence of learning • have access to ongoing professional development • enjoy good quality contact time and interactions with family

PRT workshops

Advisory group members and senior teachers in each region took a lead role in presenting and facilitating the PRT workshops. External presenters also participated in workshop sessions. Presenters at the Dunedin–Southland workshop included Helen Kennedy, deputy principal of Waverley School, Invercargill; Lynn Foote and Fiona Ellis from the University of Otago College of Education (Dunedin campus); and Meredith Kelly and Jan Cowan from the University of Otago College of Education (Southland campus). The University of Otago lecturers facilitated discussion on the transition from final-year student to first-year teacher, outlining issues, trends, barriers, and enablers. This link with teacher education providers was a unique feature of the Dunedin–Southland group. At the Wellington–Ruahine workshop, presenter Lyn James, of Manawatu Counselling Consultants, covered asking for feedback, communicating about areas of practice, and reflections on practice.

The PRT workshops featured the following common programme elements:

- goal setting
- asking for and giving feedback
- discussion of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- the pilot's online PRTs' network
- resource sharing, including evidence.

Other topics covered in one or more of the workshops included:

- expectations of the induction and mentoring pilot programme
- reflective practice and making professional judgments.

The participation of primary colleagues in the Dunedin–Southland workshop gave PRTs the opportunity to hear how the induction process is implemented in primary schools and what support is available to PRTs. The session focused on the practical aspects of an induction programme in schools rather than on the links between the school and ECE curricula and teaching and learning in each setting.

Advisory group feedback

The advisory group provided reflective feedback on the workshop experiences and on mentors' and PRTs' learning. This feedback is summarised in Chapter 3 of this report (Results).

The advisory group also identified issues for further development for mentors, including:

- professional dialogue: moving from the general to the specific
- exploring how the draft *Registered Teachers Criteria* might look in teaching practice
- what to do when a PRT is causing concern
- managing the power relationship or dynamic: head teacher and mentor role
- use of the PRT grant

- leading the induction process: the balance between different roles
- practical ideas about managing the role
- managing conflict respectfully
- safely giving and receiving feedback: managing reactions
- communication and coaching
- "nuts and bolts" of mentoring
- models of questioning to support reflective practice
- how we know if we are an effective mentor
- using Information Communication Technology
- bridging the gap: understanding Generation X and Generation Y and finding ways of working with them
- leadership and team building
- evidence: what it looks like.

The advisory group identified these topics for PRTs:

- evaluating progress on goals
- how to extend areas of teaching
- reflective practice: what does that mean and what does it look and feel like
- strategies: how to make the most of your relationship with your mentor
- understanding the association or employer
- the process when being recommended for full registration
- learning more about other kindergartens
- time management.

July workshops

A total of 52 mentors and 51 PRTs participated in the July workshops. The mentors travelled to Wellington to attend a two-day national workshop/hui on 16-17 July while the PRTs attended a one-day workshop in their own region. The researcher (Val Podmore) attended each of the workshops, recording the central themes and issues emerging from the presentations and discussion. The researcher also met with all of the mentor and PRT regional focus groups for the second and final time (see the Results section in Chapter 3 of this report).

Table 5 presents the dates of the July PRT workshops and numbers attending.

Table 5: PRT workshop attendance: July 2009

Region	Date	Location	Attendance
Dunedin–Southland	15 July, 2009	Dunedin	14 PRTs
Nelson	25 July, 2009	Nelson	20 PRTs
Wellington–Ruahine	29 July, 2009	Otaki	17 PRTs

The workshops were also attended by senior teachers other than those on the advisory group and, in Wellington–Ruahine, by advisory group member Ruth Mansell, independent consultant. Advisory

group members who attended the national two-day mentor workshop included Ruth Mansell, Gillian Dodson of NZCA, and Clare Wells, NZK. Suz Foster, NZK national administrator, attended the Information Communication Technology session.

The programmes for the regional PRT workshops were designed by the advisory group members from each region based on the feedback from PRTs attending the previous workshops and the senior teachers' knowledge of the teaching teams in their regions. The national mentor workshop programme covered a range of topics focusing on the areas identified as requiring further development by the advisory group and by mentors at the previous two regional workshops. The programme reflected the quality mentoring, skills, knowledge, and dispositions and programme content outlined in the *Draft Guidelines*.

Mentor workshop

The mentor workshop programme was a mix of presentations and facilitated discussions focusing on developing mentors' understanding of their role as well as providing practical skills and resources.

Dr Janis Carroll-Lind, principal advisor (Education), Office of the Children's Commissioner, Manaakitia a Tatou Tamariki presented the first session "Reflections on mentoring". The presentation focused on the experiences and reflections of mentors undertaking the Massey University programme "Role of the associate and tutor teacher", which examines the theory and practice of the role of mentor with particular focus on validation and modification of beliefs and practice. Dr Carroll-Lind shared insights and ideas on mentoring from programme participants, discussed the process of validation, and talked about the need for mentors to assist PRTs to develop their practical knowledge of "the four Ss"—students, situation, subject, strategies. She also covered questioning and the teacher as a change agent, and presented a series of questions for the group to discuss.

"Giving meaning to the *Draft Guidelines*" focused participants on the *Draft Guidelines*. This session was presented and facilitated by advisory group members Lee Blackie and Pam Wilson, of the Dunedin and Southland Kindergarten Associations respectively. The session affirmed the approach that mentors need to take to work with PRTs collaboratively, rather than in a hierarchical relationship.

Presented by Lee Blackie, "Celebrating and respecting the generations" focused on understanding the differences between generations. Workshop participants reflected on how these differences might have an impact on personal and professional relationships, values, expectations of PRTs by their mentors and of mentors by their PRTs, and the ways teaching teams communicate and work together.

Impact Education advisor Chris Rowan facilitated a session entitled "Relationships and the difficult conversation". The session acknowledged there are times when mentors will need to have conversations that may be difficult. Building on the earlier discussion on generational differences, the group discussed how people have different experiences, skills, and approaches, which has an

impact on how a conversation is received. Chris Rowan talked about what people bring to conversations—the so-called "trollies": values, beliefs, experiences—and how these influence the way we approach conversations. She covered role clarity, the "four conspirators in communication", problem ownership, the DENO framework (*description* of behaviour; *effects* of behaviour; *needs* or preference you have; *others* perspective and input) and pushback.

The programme also included a review and discussion of Sir Ken Robinson's 2008 TED lecture "Creativity: reaching potential" and a presentation on issues around gaining full teacher registration by Deborah Wansbrough, Policy Advisor ECE of the Council.

The group was privileged to meet three newly registered teachers who joined a panel to talk about their experiences and expectations of mentoring and their reflections on the journey towards full registration. Further details of the discussion are included in Chapter 3 of this report (Results). Comments from the Wellington teacher panel included:

> I think the most important thing for registration is the relationship with the mentor.

> I had a superb mentor. We would have daily discussions rather than leaving it until the [next meeting].

> She would let me know how I could help her too. It depends how much you [and your mentor] are prepared to show and share.

PRT workshops

A mix of external and senior teacher presenters was a feature of the July PRT workshops. Australian educational consultant Tony Ryan facilitated the Dunedin–Southland workshop "Your fantastic future" covering planning your own professional learning, the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, coaching, and time management. Tony Ryan explored with the group: how children learn best; what quality teaching looks, feels, and sounds like; "the best teaching you've ever seen"; how people learn new practices; and professional dialogue and difficult conversations.

In Nelson, the focus was on reflective practice with Dharan Longley of Insight Education facilitating the key session "Intentional teaching: harnessing the power of reflective practice". Dharan Longley explored the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, teaching as inquiry, critical pedagogy, courageous conversations, and planning strategies. Participants discussed documentation on reflections on teaching practice that PRTs had bought to the workshop.

Common elements covered by the PRT workshops included:

- in-depth discussion on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*: "unpacking" the criteria, understanding meaning, exploring how the criteria would look in practice
- goal setting: linking goal setting to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- courageous or difficult conversations
- sharing resources and ideas: documentation and evidence
- reflective practice: what does it look like
- the pilot's online network for PRTs.

The pilot's online networks

The online network for mentors was planned as a key part of the pilot. The aim was to provide mentors with the opportunity to "...extend the scope of their collaborative networks, learn from others experience, share problems, and get feedback promptly." (NZK, 2008, p.9)

Establishing the online community was part of the re-development of the NZK website. However, as this work experienced delays, NZK established separate and temporary online facilities—one for mentors and another for PRTs—to ensure this part of the pilot proceeded.

Establishing the online community involved setting up a database of mentor and PRT email addresses and inviting people to sign up to the appropriate site. Each person was sent information on how to access the site and how to access support from the NZK national office. An advisory group member, Ruth Mansell, was signed up to both groups to monitor the issues being raised, offer advice and pose questions, and answer or redirect queries. NZK intended that mentors and PRTs would use the site to communicate and debate ideas directly with each other, rather than through one person leading the conversation.

By July 2009, a number of issues were evident. NZK's efforts were focused on the mentors. Encouraging mentors to sign up to the facility and to engage with their peers was difficult, although the number of mentors on the site was growing. Feedback from mentors and PRTs about the online networks provides an insight into why it took some time for people to engage. Findings included the following, for example:

- Both mentors and PRTs were unclear about the purpose of the networks and how they fit with the pilot.
- People found it difficult to access the site. In some cases this was because usernames and passwords were unclear or because people were not confident about finding their way around the site.
- Mentors and PRTs questioned the potential of the online networks and how the technology could support the induction and mentoring programme.
- Some people did not feel they have the skills to participate.
- People found going onto the site took time, adding pressure to an already busy schedule.

Drawing on this feedback from the mentors and PRTs, the advisory group decided to include specific sessions within the July workshops to provide further information about the online networks and to build participants' confidence.

At their two-day workshop, the mentors had the opportunity to meet Suz Foster, the NZK support person for the online communities, and to participate in a session presented by her on how to access and use the site. Ruth Mansell also talked about her role and asked mentors for feedback. Key issues that emerged from the mentors' discussion were: the confidentiality of discussions and whether the purpose of the site is the discussion of professional issues or a place to share ideas and resources to support the role of mentor, or both. The feedback suggested that having specific questions on the site, to which mentors could respond, would be a more effective way to engage mentors online.

At each of the regional PRT workshops, participants talked about the online PRTs' network and its potential to support the induction programme and teaching practice. They also identified issues associated with using this online resource.

The feedback from mentors and PRTs after the July workshops indicated that more people, particularly mentors, intended to engage online. After the July mentors' workshop, there was dialogue online, with a number of mentors reflecting on the workshop sessions and how their learning could apply not only to their role as mentor but also to their leadership role within the teaching team. Ruth Mansell also injected conversation starters, picked up on conversation streams to extend inquiries, and linked discussion directly to teaching practice.

October workshops

The final series of workshops took place during October 2009. The workshops for mentors and PRTs were held on different days in Dunedin–Southland and Nelson and on the same day in Wellington–Ruahine. The numbers attending varied from previous workshops, with mentors and PRTs new to the process joining the group (see Table 6).

Table 6: Workshop attendance: October 2009

Region	Date	Location	Attendance
Dunedin–Southland	20 October, 2009	Invercargill	15 PRTs
	21 October, 2009	Invercargill	13 mentors
Nelson	10 October, 2009	Nelson	27 PRTs
	28 October, 2009	Nelson	18 mentors
Wellington–Ruahine	17 October, 2009	Paraparaumu	17 PRTs
			24 mentors

Senior teachers other than those on the advisory committee continued to support the regional workshops.

The programme outline was developed by the advisory committee, reflecting the feedback from previous workshops and from the preliminary research findings, and the planning undertaken at the regional level. As this was the final workshop, the committee decided to focus on three aspects:

- feedback: looking at the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines* and identifying what evidence looks like
- evaluation: exploring how participation in the pilot has shifted practice
- inspiration: keeping up the momentum and ending the pilot on a "high note".

The final workshops would also pick up on specific issues identified by mentors or PRTs in each region. Participants would also be presented with certificates signed by NZK chief executive Clare Wells and Council director Dr Peter Lind.

Senior teachers facilitated the workshops. In Dunedin–Southland, Tony Laker from Laker House of Travel inspired the mentors and Dave Robinson, recipient of the National Excellence in Teaching

Award, met with the PRTs. In Wellington–Ruahine, David Savage of Elevate Coaching and Team Drive presented a session on goal setting.

Deborah Wansbrough, Policy Advisor ECE of the Council, attended each of the PRT workshops to discuss the Council's induction documentation requirements. This had been a significant issue throughout the pilot with PRTs asking questions about how much documentation would be sufficient.

Workshop survey

After the October workshop, participants were asked to complete a feedback form on the workshop and also on their views of the ECE pilot. Mentors described ways in which being a participant in the ECE pilot programme had changed their mentoring practice. PRTs described how being a participant had changed their teaching practice in kindergartens or ECE centres. Mentors were asked what advice they would offer to first-time mentors, and PRTs were asked what advice they would give a first-year PRT about undertaking the induction and mentoring programme.

Mentor feedback

Across the regions, most mentors said that the final workshop met their expectations. Although the precise content of each regional workshop varied, mentors and PRTs across the regions valued the networking and the focused discussions that took place at the final workshops. Mentors specifically mentioned the following aspects as useful:

- "recapping and tying up loose ends"
- clarifying mentors' roles and responsibilities
- the speakers' presentations
- meeting and networking with other mentors
- discussions with other mentors (centred on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the *Draft Guidelines*).

Mentors found the most useful and successful aspects of the pilot were:

- mutual support and networking with other mentors
- giving and receiving feedback and gaining listening skills
- the two-day national workshop/hui with other mentors
- the focus on the importance of relationships
- gaining mentoring skills and understanding the mentor role
- "unpacking" the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

The least useful aspects for mentors were: the distances travelled, timing of the workshops and "early starts", "one late meeting", "sometimes a double-up of information", and no "feedback and lack of participation on Wordpress" (the interim online network).

When mentors were asked for other general comments about the ECE pilot programme, their responses affirmed the importance of networking, relationships, and insight into the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria.*

When the responses were collated across the three regions, it was apparent that mentors believed:

- they were more confident in their role
- their relationships with PRTs had become centrally important
- they were giving PRTs more written feedback
- they had developed more skills as educative mentors.

Mentors reported they had built learning relationships with their PRTs as a result of participating in the induction and mentoring pilot programme. Mentors also commented on how they were applying their newly developed skills to their practice:

> I have become more reflective. Hopefully [I] have refined and enhanced my communication skills. I believe I have challenged some of my prior beliefs and thoughts as a mentor and leader.

> I would use a more planned approach to mentoring, with more emphasis on a critical culture and developing the relationship as a foundation. [I understand] the importance of a "critical culture" and the ability to have reflective and at times courageous conversations.

> [I am] more reflective of my own teaching [and have] strategies for feedback [and] challenging PRTs [and am] more…focused.

Mentors were asked what advice they would give to a first-time mentor. The responses emphasised relationships and understanding the role of an educative mentor, and the importance of networking and professional development.

PRT feedback

Almost all PRTs from all regions found that the final workshop met their expectations. PRTs' comments across the regions showed that they considered the following aspects of the workshop most useful:

- having Council expectations for full registration explained
- receiving practical advice about gathering evidence related to specific criteria in the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- networking with other PRTs from their own and other regions.

In response to a question about what they experienced as less useful, several PRTs commented that they would have preferred having a session from the Council about expectations for full registration right at the beginning of the pilot. It was also mentioned that the online network was "not working" for PRTs.

For the PRTs, the most useful and successful aspects of the pilot were the following:

- the support networks that have evolved
- meeting colleagues for discussion and feedback
- "unpacking" the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- gaining an understanding of the registration process
- support for mentors and enhanced relationships with mentors.

Less successful aspects were that some PRTs found the days very long, with the additional travelling time. Two PRTs also identified the online network as a less successful aspect.

Other general comments from the PRTs about the ECE pilot programme included the value of having mentors and including them in the same programme, the usefulness of discussing registration, and the importance of networking.

Many PRTs felt that being a participant in the ECE pilot programme had changed their teaching practice by making them more reflective, confident, objective, and open-minded. Overall, PRTs stated that the induction and mentoring pilot programme had contributed to enhanced relationships with their mentors, which in turn had a positive influence on their teaching. PRTs said it was important to be open-minded, to see full registration as part of their day-to-day teaching practice and not get inundated with the work, and to do small amounts of evidence gathering on a regular basis.

2. Methodology

This chapter outlines the methodology adopted in the research portion of the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme. It describes how data were collected through workshop observations, focus group interviews, and feedback surveys. The processes used to collate and analyse this data are also discussed, along with ethical considerations and the study's robustness.

Aim and research question

The aim of the ECE pilot research was to generate data for reflection and, drawing on the experiences of participants, to document, assess, and enhance the process and impact of the workshops and the pilot programme.

The research was designed to address the following key research question:

- How does the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme make a difference to the mentors' and PRTs' learning and teaching?

The *Draft Guidelines* was an integral part of the induction and mentoring pilot programme and of the research.

Ethical considerations

Teaching ethics and research ethics were considered. The mentors, as registered teachers, were guided by their professional code of ethics (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2003/2006), with its overriding principles of justice, responsible care, and truth. The professional obligations of particular relevance to this research and development project included commitment to learners (in this case the PRTs) and commitment to family/whānau, society, and the profession.

The research was developed and carried out following the ethical guidelines of the New Zealand Association for Research in Education (1998). There was an emphasis on consent, confidentiality, and cultural appropriateness. Before work with participants began, an ethics application was prepared, with drafts of the proposed data collection instruments, letters of approach for participation, information sheets, and consent forms attached to it. Given that invited participants from the Nelson region included PRTs from early childhood education and care centres and that mentors from NZCA were to be included in the Wellington–Ruahine regional mentors' workshops, the ethics application was submitted to the NZCA Research and Ethics Committee. It was approved after revision. Copies of the finalised information letters, information sheets, and consent forms are provided in Appendix A.

Participants

Workshops

A total of 51 mentors, including four NZCA mentors, and 60 PRTs participated in the first series of workshops in February. Fewer people attended than anticipated, for a range of reasons including there being fewer first-year PRTs than predicted, some people choosing not to be part of the pilot, sickness, and difficulties experienced in finding relieving teachers.

The MartinJenkins evaluation questionnaire provided a profile of the mentors and data on their perceptions of skills. It found that around 70% of mentors had mentored PRTs previously, with around half having been a mentor for between six months and two years. Most of the mentors (90%) had no mentoring experience outside the education sector. Most people became mentors because of "school" policy. An analysis by MartinJenkins of NZK mentors' skills in relation to the *Draft Guidelines* indicates that, in general, there were positive patterns. For example, mentors most often used the skills that they rated as most important, and less often drew upon skills they perceived as less important. There was an overall tendency for mentors to rate their skills "more conservatively" in specific areas that they considered more important, namely, communication, relationships, and leadership skills (see Appendix C).

Participants at the February and July workshops were notified verbally that observations were taking place. They were also provided with a written letter explaining the purpose and focus of the observations, together with their right to request that the observer cease recording at any point in the workshop proceedings (see Appendix A: Letter of information for mentors, PRTs, and all participants in the regional workshops).

Focus groups

In deciding on the number of participants invited to take part in the mentors' and PRTs' focus groups, the researcher was guided by practical considerations and by current research literature. The intention was to invite the same participants to both the first and the second of the two planned focus group interviews. This meant that it was necessary to have the maximum recommended number of participants included in the first focus group (in February), given that it was expected that some attrition might be inevitable by the second focus group interview (in July).

Various contemporary writers suggest that seven to 10 individuals is a suitable number for focus group interviews (for example, McMurray, Pace, & Scott, 2004; Mutch, 2005), while several authorities recommend six to 12 (for example, Vaughn, Schumm, & Sinagub, 1996). Researchers also suggest that smaller groups should be used in certain circumstances, for example, when the focus topic is highly sensitive, or the moderator is less experienced, or where focus groups are held in homes (Wilson, 1997). In the present study, the predetermined maximum number of participants per focus group was set at 10.

First round of focus groups: February

In February, mentors and PRTs participated in separate focus groups in each of the three regions: Dunedin–Southland , Nelson, and Wellington–Ruahine. Local senior teachers in each region selected mentors and PRTs to invite to the focus groups. The decisions they made were consistent with the position that those who take part in focus groups must willingly agree to participate and also be representative of the wider group of potential participants (Stewart, Shandasani, & Rook, 2006).

The invited mentors included representatives from the regional associations and, in Wellington–Ruahine, from NZCA. Ten mentors participated in each focus group.

The invited PRTs were selected to ensure "diversity". This was defined, in the first meeting of the advisory group for this pilot programme, as representing, where possible, diverse PRTs, including:

- first-year and second-year PRTs
- PRTs identifying as Māori
- PRTs from Pasifika groups
- PRTs from early childhood education and care centres as well as kindergartens (applicable only to the Nelson region)
- PRTs in different geographical locations (rural and urban, and representing the wider local region).

Follow-up focus groups: July

Each of the February focus groups (three for mentors and three for PRTs) was restricted to 10 participants. The same mentors and PRTs were then invited to the July focus groups. There was relatively little attrition. In July, between seven and 10 of the same participants were present at each of the three mentor focus groups, and between eight and 10 participants were present at each of the three regional PRT groups. Illness was the reason given for the few instances of non-attendance. One PRT had left their region (Wellington) and the pilot programme.

Research tools

The largely qualitative research methodology, and its associated data generation tools, was deemed appropriate within early childhood teaching and learning contexts. Key data generation tools included observations of workshops and focus group interviews (Bloor, Frankland, Thomas, & Robson 2001; McLachlan, 2005; Stewart, et al., 2006).

Observations of workshops

Throughout the February regional workshops and the national and regional workshops held in July, the researcher observed the discussions and took notes. The process of observing to document

learning and teaching has strong historical roots in this country, is embedded in early childhood practice (Podmore, 2006), and accordingly was appraised as appropriate by ECE teachers involved in this research.

The observational notes provide a record of the overall themes and issues and of the participants' experiences with the *Draft Guidelines* and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria.*

Focus groups

Focus group interviews were conducted with willing selected mentors and PRTs during the regional workshops. The first focus groups were held towards the end of the February 2009 regional workshops and follow-up focus groups took place at the July 2009 workshops.

Focus group interview questions

A small set of open-ended questions was developed for both mentors and PRTs. The draft questions were attached to the ethics application approved by the NZCA Research and Ethics Committee. Minor modifications to the questions were made prior to the regional workshops, in consultation with members of the advisory group. Several questions for mentors were linked to the *Draft Guidelines*. For example, questions focused on mentors' perceptions and their experiences of: what is meant by mentoring; their role as mentors; and their knowledge, skills, and learning as mentors. Focus group questions for the PRTs included an emphasis on their expectations and experiences of the ECE mentoring initiative in their region.

At the mentors' follow-up focus group meetings, similar questions were addressed, with an emphasis on changes to their mentoring and teaching practices over time and the effectiveness of the pilot programme. As in the first round of focus groups, several questions for mentors were linked to the *Draft Guidelines*. Follow-up focus group questions for the PRTs included an emphasis on how their expectations had been met, their experiences of the ECE mentoring initiative in their region, their experiences with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, and the changes made to their practice over time.

The final versions of the questions used for the mentors' and the PRTs' initial and follow-up focus groups are presented in Appendix B.

Data collection

The researcher (Val Podmore) facilitated each of the six focus groups in round one (February) and round two (July). At the six round one regional focus group interviews, two or three senior teachers took notes. One used a flip chart and large pens so that participants could view, check, and amend the records. A second recorded hand-written notes. At the majority of the focus groups, a third teacher recorded the discussion directly onto a laptop computer.

A similar process applied at the round two focus group interviews. Senior teachers, sometimes together with a member of the advisory group (Ruth Mansell), again took notes. The discussions were recorded directly onto a laptop computer and participants were able to view, check, and amend the records, either by having the laptop notes projected simultaneously onto a screen, or by notes also being recorded on a flip chart using large pens. At the majority of the focus groups, a third senior teacher took additional handwritten notes for cross-checking.

Feedback Forms

Participants at the regional workshops were invited to complete feedback forms, prepared by the regional senior teachers. A standard form was used for mentors at the national workshop/hui in July and for all mentors and PRTs participating in the final regional workshops in October 2009.

Data analysis processes

The researcher identified and highlighted key themes and emerging issues for mentors and PRTs from the observational notes recorded at each of the February workshops. The themes and issues were then collated and synthesised across the notes from each of the regions. A similar process was used to identify key themes and issues at the PRTs' July regional workshops. Ongoing or further key themes and issues for mentors were also identified from the observational records of their two-day national workshop/hui in July 2009.

The focus group data were collated, drawing on the transcripts and written records, across the regional mentors' groups under each of the focus group questions. The same process was used to collate the data from the PRTs' regional focus groups and for the mentors' and PRTs' follow-up focus groups in July.

The researcher also included comments made on the feedback forms and trends from information collated across the forms submitted by mentors in July and mentors and PRTs in October in the findings of this pilot.

Data were triangulated, drawing on these three sources of collated and synthesised data, together with the senior teachers' and advisory committee members' reflections. The reflections were on their direct experiences of the workshops and with the participating mentors and PRTs, and on the preliminary findings.

Robustness

The research plan included several data generation tools and triangulation of data. "Intra-triangulation", where several data generation techniques are used within a qualitative study, is an effective process for enhancing the robustness of research (McMurray, et al., 2004, p. 263–64). The research plan included documentation of changes to address the research question and to show how the piloted model makes a difference to mentors' and PRTs' learning and teaching.

The advisory group set up to monitor the pilot programme made a major contribution to quality assurance throughout the project. The advisory group received updates from the regions and from the researcher, contributed to the development of the milestone reports, and provided advice on the content of workshops, as needed. The advisory group was guided by the requirements set out in the contract agreed with the Council to deliver the pilot.

3.   Results

This chapter presents findings from research conducted alongside the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme. It provides detailed findings from the researcher's workshop observations and the two rounds of focus groups and summarises feedback from mentors, PRTs, and senior teachers involved in the pilot programme.

Workshop observations

The researcher observed discussions and took notes at the initial regional workshops in February, which were attended by a total of 111 mentors and PRTs, and the national mentor workshop and three regional PRT workshops in July, attended by 52 mentors and a total of 51 PRTs respectively. Overall themes and participants' experiences with the Draft Guidelines *and draft* Registered Teacher Criteria *are presented in the following section.*

First workshop series: February

This section of the report summarises the overall themes and issues evident from the February workshops of the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme. Drawing on notes taken at each regional workshop and the researcher's observations at these workshops, it includes information about potential enablers and barriers to effective induction and mentoring in ECE contexts.

A draft of this summary document was discussed at the advisory committee meeting on 19 March, 2009. It was confirmed that the researcher would observe and take notes at the regional and national workshops planned for July. Senior teachers in each region also received copies of the notes from the February workshops to assist with planning future workshops.

Draft Registered Teacher Criteria

At the first workshops, most participants were unfamiliar with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. They discussed the purpose of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* (making reference to enabling compliance and strengthening confidence in the profession, for example) and its relevance to newly graduated ECE teachers.

In all regions, participants compared the *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. Feedback on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* was enthusiastic, especially regarding its clarity.

In Dunedin–Southland, the shift from the *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* was regarded favourably overall. A main theme, as recorded in the workshop notes, was that the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* is useful and clearly structured. Mentors and PRTs commented that the criteria within the document are consistent with early childhood principles (*Te Whāriki*) because they start with relationships. The ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme was seen to offer a valuable opportunity to network across services and regions and to learn about working towards meeting the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

Participants discussed goal setting and planning for change. PRTs discussed their plans to keep professional development logs of meaningful events and meetings. The reflective journaling model contained in Nelson Kindergarten Association's "Reflective Portfolio Toolkit" was identified as useful for encouraging professional development. Second-year PRTs were reassured that there are clear links between the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions*. The Nelson Kindergarten Association "Links" document was seen as useful.

In Nelson, only four of around 45 participants had read the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* prior to the workshop. The workshop was therefore an opportunity to read and reflect upon the document and to discuss its relevance. The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* was received favourably. During discussion, one PRT noted: "[On the] bicultural aspect of tikanga and te reo "demonstrate" is insufficient. It is more appropriate to word this "being an active participant in".

On the second day of the Wellington–Ruahine workshop, when both mentors and PRTs were present, participants discussed "unpacking" the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions*, and *Draft Guidelines*. A senior teacher clarified that the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* was being used in the pilot programme. In small mixed groups of mentors and PRTs, participants focused on issues such as collecting evidence to meet the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. Examples of evidence suggested included: Learning Stories, conversations with colleagues about their practice, reflective questioning, and contact and planning procedures with their mentor.

Across all regions, the workshops offered an opportunity for clarification of the registration process and explanations about the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines*. Overall, there was strong support for the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and appreciation of the clarity of the information provided and presented at the ECE pilot February workshops.

However, second-year PRTs (most notably in one of the three sites) voiced concerns about the relationship between the kindergarten professional standards (in the teachers' collective employment agreement), the Council's *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions,* and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. They saw this as a potential barrier to effective registration and were later assured that the ECE pilot programme would support them in this time of transition. These PRTs also sought further clarification about whether and how their documentation would count towards meeting the registration requirements at the end of this year, their second year as PRTs. (This issue was also emphasised during a PRTs' focus group).

The Draft Guidelines

The Dunedin venue for the first workshop had wireless facilities and participants were able to view documents on the Council website (including the Code of Ethics, draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines*) on laptops. Mentors read and discussed the *Draft Guidelines* (and completed the MartinJenkins questionnaire). Mentors noted that this was the first time they had seen the *Draft Guidelines*. The initial discussion suggested that the *Draft Guidelines* could be useful. Mentor participants referred specifically to *Draft Guidelines* 7.1 (3a): "Mentors are able to…Facilitate constructive but challenging professional conversations with PRTs and maintain their enthusiasm". This was identified as a key function and a positive, continuing challenge for mentors.

In Nelson, mentors and head teachers engaged in in-depth reflection (using workbooks). They considered their qualities and attributes as mentors; what others who knew them would say their qualities were; and, when thinking about motivating others, what aspects of ECE they were most passionate about. Mentors and the facilitators discussed the importance of having an approach that emphasises strengths (versus weaknesses) when mentoring. They also discussed the importance, to effective mentoring, of providing challenges and support, as well as conducting appraisal and assessment in order to anticipate and avoid performance issues (using an "Appreciative inquiry" focus). These discussions and suggestions are relevant to Section 7.1 (3) of the *Draft Guidelines*.

On the first day of the Wellington–Ruahine mentors' workshop, Kate Thornton from Victoria University led a well-received presentation and discussion on leadership and mentoring. Mentors agreed that the notion of support is important for mentors. Their collective emphasis on support was consistent with *Draft Guidelines* 6.2. In addition, mentors noted that the concepts of co-construction of learning and of collaborative learning were not included in the *Draft Guidelines*. They suggested that co-construction and/or collaborative learning should be added to 6.2 of the *Draft Guidelines*.

Noting that coaching (including questioning and being a role model) is needed in mentoring PRTs to full registration, the facilitator presented a range of types of questions that lead to deeper reflection. These included clarifying and analytical questions. Mentor participants commented on their tendency to jump in with too many questions too quickly. An advisory committee member said that important areas for questions include reflecting on teaching practice and encouraging thinking "about the children you are working with". This links to the vision statement for *Draft Guidelines* 3.2: "Effective teachers for diverse learning", and also to 6.1.

Participants further reflected on the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of mentor teachers during whole-group feedback on the characteristics of an effective mentoring relationship. Characteristics identified by the mentor participants included open communication, respect and trust, mutual understanding of mentoring, commitment to the relationship, clarity of goals, honest feedback, willingness to listen, development of a responsive reciprocal relationship, and new knowledge being taken (mutually) to the next level.

These suggested characteristics appear relevant in the context of the draft interim list provided in section 7.1 (3) of the *Draft Guidelines*.

In summary, very few of the mentors from any region were familiar with the *Draft Guidelines* prior to the February workshops. The workshops offered an opportunity to read and reflect on the *Draft Guidelines* and to take part in related discussions. (The MartinJenkins questionnaire and the mentors' focus groups further extended this opportunity.)

The pilot's online networks

Participants discussed the ECE pilot's online networks. Comments included the following:

> How do you get on? Can more than one person respond [to a question]?

> Discussions are useful historical documents, recording change over time.

> [To use a discussion] as evidence of change, comments could be included in a reflective journal (with other people's names kept confidential).

Participants emphasised that it would be helpful to have a knowledgeable advisor linked into the online networks to provide Council-related advice about induction and registration. It was at this point that the advisory group decided to appoint an online facilitator. Ruth Mansell of the advisory group took up the role of injecting conversation starters, picking up on conversation streams to extend inquiries, and linking discussion directly to teaching practice.

Synchrony with teacher education

Another theme evident in the discussions concerned the importance of enhancing the synchrony and consistency between (a) induction and mentoring programmes leading to teacher registration and (b) initial teacher education programmes.

The discussions in Dunedin–Southland emphasised the value of connections with teacher education (University of Otago), with early childhood education and care centres, and with primary schools. A senior teacher reported that the pilot team had made contact with the University of Otago College of Education and signalled that staff (per Lynn Foote, ECE director) would be present at the May workshops. Primary school teachers would also be invited to the May workshops to provide their perspective and promote links with the primary sector.

The PRTs discussed how to maintain journals and data to meet the kindergarten teacher professional standards and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. Advice from second-year PRTs included: collaborating with experienced others to see how they have maintained records to assess their own practice, time management and keeping it (relatively) simple and manageable, and respectful use of professional time.

New PRTs who were recent graduates could see continuity with their teacher education programmes, because it was through their teacher education programmes that they had become well-practiced in writing their philosophies and recording their practices. It was agreed that they could link the events of the day, on a daily basis, with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* as evidence that they were

meeting the necessary criteria. A related strategy was having a box to collect examples of documentation, including (with permission) colleagues' observations of their practice and video camera footage. This practice of keeping information and documenting learning is familiar to new graduates. It was recommended that PRTs have personal copies of *Te Whāriki*, *Kei Tua o te Pae/Assessment for Learning: Early Childhood Exemplars (*Ministry of Education, 2004, 2007, & 2009) and *Ngā Arohaehae Whai Hua/Self-review guidelines for early childhood education* (Ministry of Education, 2006).

There appeared to be consensus at this regional workshop that synchrony and co-ordination with teacher education providers is a likely "enabler" of effective induction and mentoring. Further findings on this theme were recorded during the pilot.

Collaboration across ECE services

There was some preliminary evidence, from the records of workshop discussions in Nelson, that participants valued the inclusion of both kindergarten PRTs and ECE centre teachers in the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme in this region. Representatives from both groups (kindergartens and ECE centres) participated in the Nelson PRTs' focus group.

This theme was also evident in Wellington–Ruahine, where mentors from early childhood education and care centres (NZCA) were included. NZCA's mentors were also represented in the Wellington–Ruahine mentors' focus group.

Follow-up observations: July

This section of the report summarises the overall themes and issues identified from the observational records of the two-day national workshop/hui for mentors, held on 16-17 July, 2009, and the three regional PRT workshops held during the month.

Issues for mentors

Initial concerns

During small-group discussions held on the first morning of the workshop, mentors identified their current concerns (see Table 7).

Table 7: Mentors' concerns: national workshop, July 2009

Mentoring issue	Key discussion points
Mentoring roles and tasks	• Developing shared understanding of what it is to be a mentor • Understanding the national guidelines • Determining how much of the process mentors initiate • Determining how much documentation is expected • Determining how much time the role requires • Managing time to keep to routines and keep in contact
Mentoring PRTs with a range of experiences	• Extending competent PRTs • Dealing with different levels of competence among PRTs • Dealing with a range of training backgrounds; dealing with issues around quality of training • Understanding that the PRT may have finished training (for example, through a one-year speed course) but not be completely competent • Working with people with limited experience of technology (for example, mature Pasifika PRTs) • Managing part-time, particularly with part-time PRTs
The pilot's online mentors' network	• Ensuring PRTs' anonymity so they are not "labelled" • Ensuring confidentiality
Mentoring context	• For kindergarten mentors: defining head teacher role and mentor role • For ECE centre mentors: developing professional learning without conflict with the centre's philosophy and practices

Communication and trust

Following a presentation by Dr Janis Carroll-Lind, from the Office of the Children's Commissioner, mentors discussed key questions in small groups. First, they reflected on what is important for mentors:

> Communication and empathy, trust, being collaborative, reflective, and honest [are important]. [We should] let the PRTs have the freedom to make mistakes and then change their practice.

> [It is important that] mentors and PRTs are co-thinkers and co-inquirers.

Mentors emphasised relationship building in response to the question, "How could differences in age, gender, culture, and so on, impact on the mentoring relationship?"

> [It is important] to acknowledge the relationship—[to take the] time to build this, to interact and make the difference. [It is] important for the mentor to find out about PRTs' different values and beliefs [and to] acknowledge mature teachers.

Mentors also discussed how they would plan an evaluation session with a PRT, based on an observation of them teaching an activity:

> Be prepared and ready to pose a challenge for the next level of practice. Offer prompt feedback. Seek the PRT's perspective about how they feel about the observation.

Mentors considered the difference between being a coach and being a mentor. Their interpretations of this difference included: "Coaching is more up-skilling and teaching new skills, celebrating, directing people on new path", whereas "Mentoring is concerned with helping PRTs choose their own path".

They also discussed what "educative mentoring" means in practice:

> [Educative mentoring involves] valuing people's contributions and challenging them to move forward, with self reflection. [It means] involving the whole team in educative experiences.

> [Educative mentoring requires] respectful cultural relationships; acknowledging cultural differences.

Mentors emphasised the importance of a collaborative approach and co-construction, rather than a "sink or swim approach":

> [We should be engaged in] supportive collaborative work together; taking risks and talking about mistakes in a positive light: sharing with PRTs that mentors are learning too.

> [It is important to] accept differences and encourage [PRTs] to co-construct. Don't take over, but don't set up failure. Don't rescue them too early, but don't intervene too [late]——allow a "dog paddling" phase. [We are] role modelling, but not "cloning". [We must] know and understand the resilience of the PRT to help prevent sinking.

Inter-generational communication

On the second day of the national workshop/hui for mentors, Lee Blackie of the Dunedin Kindergarten Association led a session on "Generation X and Y: celebrating and respecting the generations". Several mentors had requested that this topic be covered at the workshop. Related discussions emphasised that different generations will have substantially different priorities and approaches to their work and careers. Mentors highlighted that reciprocal relationships and understanding "where people in our teams are coming from" are important for mentors and PRTs.

Power relationships

A session hosted by Chris Rowan of Impact Education generated considerable discussion on the topic of "Power relationships and difficult conversations". Mentors engaged in individual reflections and then a collective "storm and sort" exercise. They identified the following "factors that make

speaking up hard": "lack of skills", "integrating the response", uncertainty about "how to initiate the conversation", concerns about the "ongoing relationship", and "wanting the whole story first".

Mentors reflected on the mentoring role in relation to power through the question, "What stops the other person from hearing us?" There was a discussion about "drivers" for PRTs in their daily work and about how to prepare to have a difficult conversation with a PRT. A key summary point from mentors' discussions and feedback was that it is important "to build and maintain a quality partnership through ongoing reciprocal relationships". From this session, mentors reported that they learned the importance of:

- being prepared before initiating difficult conversations
- being self-aware ("You choose your attitude, but it is also important to be aware of your strategies, both verbal and non-verbal.")
- understanding boundaries as mentors and being clear about the mentoring role
- having reference points as mentors (including the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*)
- laughing and knowing yourself.

The *Draft Guidelines*

The importance of relationships was reiterated during a session on "Giving meaning to the *Draft Guidelines*" facilitated by senior teachers Pam Wilson and Lee Blackie. Drawing on research by Aitken et al (2008) the facilitators emphasised that quality mentoring influences retention. Mentors agreed that a role of the mentor is to build leadership capacity by working collaboratively with the PRT. The facilitators also pointed to the importance of sustaining good relationships, problem solving, and building a community of support with the PRT.

Mentors discussed the vision statement in *Draft Guidelines* 6.1:

> An effective mentor is a reflective practitioner focused on inquiry into their own and others' professional practice and learning—based on a clear understanding of outstanding teaching. (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009)

Mentors questioned whether "outstanding" should be modified. They wondered if it would put too much pressure on colleagues in the future. Suggestions to replace "outstanding" were: "effective", "good", and "with a passion to move forward". After a whole-group discussion, the mentors agreed to request that the phrase "based on a clear understanding of outstanding teaching" be deleted to support the concept of āko and continued learning.

Mentors also discussed the second part of the vision statement in *Draft Guidelines* 6.1:

> An effective mentor acts as a change agent and educational leader, dedicated to facilitating growth in professional capability of the colleagues they specifically support and to the wider learning community. (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009)

They focused on the question, "What knowledge, skills and dispositions do you have that enable you to do this?" Mentors questioned the expression "change agent", which they considered to be in conflict with the concept of "doing things *with* the PRT". The group agreed to suggest the words "change agent" be deleted. They considered this was "less pretentious" and "recognised co-construction" or a "mentors working *with* the PRT" approach.

Mentors also considered the question, "As a mentor, how are you establishing a culture of collaborative professional enquiry?"

> We help teachers, when setting goals, to have resources available, such as *Quality in Action* and *Kei Tua o te Pae*.
>
> Having a PRT in the ECE centre helps collaborative enquiry.
>
> [Through] Wiki appraisal (or Google docs), multiple voices contribute to appraisal.
>
> The process of self review is about collaborative inquiry.
>
> [I am] modelling professional conversations.

Mentors were also asked, "Do you consistently demonstrate (for the PRT) effective teaching for diverse learners?" They said this involved being aware of their own practice. Some mentors questioned whether it was realistic to expect consistency. Their rationale was that the need for consistency doesn't take into account different circumstances and services. However, this suggestion was not supported by the group as a whole.

Mentors were asked, "How do you establish and maintain respectful relationships and effective mentoring relationships?" Responses included:

> By developing an initial mentor–PRT contract.
>
> By socialising or team bonding [early on]…by scheduling with absolute priority (that is, entering specific meeting times in a diary)…by touching base informally between meetings.
>
> By clarifying expectations at the start and consistently addressing the PRTs' goals.

The online mentors' network

Mentors were concerned with the lack of confidentiality on the pilot's proposed online network. During a workshop session entitled "Continuing professional development: the online facility", Clare Wells, Suz Foster, and Ruth Mansell outlined the progress made on the site. A temporary facility had been set up, using Wordpress, to promote continuing professional dialogue between mentors in the pilot. After explaining that Wordpresss was confidential and included only invited members, Suz Foster demonstrated the login procedure. A discussion of issues focused mainly on confidentiality and how to avoid identifying oneself or one's PRT. It was suggested that the site

administrator (Suz Foster) could receive messages on tricky issues directly from mentors and upload them to the site to preserve the anonymity of the mentor's PRT.

Gaining full registration

Deborah Wansbrough, ECE policy advisor at the Council, provided mentors with clarification on issues related to full teacher registration. For example, she confirmed that the 0.5 FTTE (full time teacher equivalent) employment requirement for a PRT represents 12.5 contact hours per week (meetings and non contact hours would be over and above). [Note that since this presentation the half time position has been restated as a half time equivalent of a full time teaching position in the educational setting.] Furthermore, she explained that the Council expected the two-year induction and mentoring programme to provide PRTs with meetings with their mentor; teaching observation data to analyse, practice, and act upon; and continuing professional development opportunities that contribute to their growth. PRTs should be able to articulate how they are able to meet the required standards, but this work should be "not on top of, but fall out of" day-to-day teaching.

Mentors also raised specific concerns, including the following two questions:

- What happens if a mentor finds a PRT is not ready for full registration?
  Deborah Wansbrough said it is important to recognise that the two-year mentoring period is a minimum. In the past, the PRTs' professional development funding and time has been used to extend the mentoring period.
- When there is a change of mentor, what should the new mentor do?
  Deborah Wansbrough confirmed that the current mentor is responsible for ensuring the PRT provides evidence of any previous induction programme and can determine when the PRT is ready for signing off on full registration.

Insights from newly registered teachers

Newly registered teachers were invited to the July mentor's workshop to talk about their experience of working towards full registration. Mentors commented that they greatly valued the opportunity to hear from these new teachers. Insightful comments from the newly registered teachers included the following:

> I think the most important thing for registration is the relationship with the mentor. Role modelling was important. As a PRT, we were always told it was our responsibility [to work towards goals], but it was useful working with the mentor to break down the goals: I had so many goals.

> I had a superb mentor. We would have discussions [during the day] rather than leaving it until the [next meeting]. I collected so much data, but I needed [support from the mentor] to collate and make sense of the data. I probably needed to put goals in place to reach registration at a quicker pace.

It was an awesome process for me. With support from my mentor, I set goals. The contract is really important. A key thing is to look back on your evidence; a month or so later, you may have new insights. My mentor was great; she gave me reports each term on how I was meeting my goals. She would let me know how I could help her too. It depends how much you [and your mentor] are prepared to show and share.

You grow professionally [by looking back over your evidence folder and learning stories].

The relationship is important. You grow in confidence with support from [your] mentor.

It helps to have feedback, knowing you are not going to be attacked.

The mentor also grows: [my] mentor said they grew professionally through the process.

I did a survey [of families] to see how I could meet one of my goals [with support from mentor].

Issues for PRTs

The observations of the workshop discussions revealed several issues of importance to PRTs. These included: relationships and communication within teams, shifts in practice, transitioning from the pilot to continuing professional learning, time management, the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, pilot enablers and barriers, and the pilot's online network for PRTs. This section of the report summarises these issues.

Relationships and communication within teams

Across the three regions, PRTs emphasised the central importance of relationships with their mentors and in their teams. PRTs from Dunedin–Southland , for example, identified the core principles of effective teams as:

> …being equals, respecting diversity, growth, friendly relationships, fun, trust, empathy, affirmation for who you are, having goals and a purpose, spiritual strength, emotional connections.

They recommended "professional development [that includes] your whole team".

Shifts in practice

PRTs often commented on the positive changes they were making to their teaching in the kindergartens and ECE centres. PRTs said that they were moving towards increasingly reflective practice and they linked these changes to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. Comments from Nelson PRTs, for example, included:

> [I am] reflecting [more] and looking all the time at what I am doing with the children.

> [My] practice [has] improved: scanning, conversations with the children, ideas to extend the children's interest…improved confidence.

PRTs also noted that they were responding to their mentors' feedback and changing their documentation procedures and focus:

> [My] practice feels more integrated. Feedback, too, feels more linked between all parties.

> [I have] changed my folder set up. [I am] more confident about what I am putting in it.

> I have since looked through my folder regularly and started revisiting reflective entries again.

PRTs' changes in practice also encompassed increasing professionalism:

> [I am becoming] more professionally aware through philosophically- and ethically-led discussion and practice.

Transitioning from the pilot to continuing professional learning

PRTs discussed how they would manage their professional learning after the pilot was complete. At the Dunedin workshop, for example, the PRTs practiced coaching one another, using a set of core questions provided by the facilitator. They concluded that "in coaching, you rarely tell one another what to do". Choosing one area of professional work and coaching each other using core questions was seen as one way PRTs might move from being provided with a mentor to initiating some ongoing coaching among themselves after the pilot.

Time management

During their discussions, Nelson PRTs identified time constraints as a barrier to reflective practice and documentation. Time management was also a topic for discussion at the Dunedin–Southland PRTs' workshop. Tony Ryan, the facilitator, emphasised the importance of "looking after ourselves" and monitoring the level of stress experienced. PRTs engaged in an exercise where they named three to five roles in their lives, clarified the actions involved for each role, and attributed priority to each of the roles in their daily timetable.

Draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

All workshops looked at the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. The Wellington–Ruahine PRTs' workshop generated considerable discussion around specific criteria, with a particular emphasis on applying these criteria to practice. PRTs discussed the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* in detail and particularly reflected on barriers and enablers related to Criteria 5 ("Show leadership that contributes to effective teaching and learning") and goal setting and leadership related to Criteria 10 ("Work effectively within the bicultural context of Aotearoa New Zealand"). The workshop offered an opportunity for PRTs to reflect on, and plan, bicultural teaching practices.

Pilot enablers and barriers

PRTs in Nelson held group discussions to determine what aspects of the induction and mentoring pilot programme were working and which were not. Positive aspects of the pilot programme included:

- relationships and educative conversations with mentors
- greater clarity about expectations, goals, and documentation
- clearer criteria within the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

PRTs comments about enabling factors they were experiencing through their relationships with mentors included the following:

> [We gain] support from the head teacher because they also understand what's expected.

> [Having] meetings with mentors on a regular basis [is important].

> [I get] fantastic support from [my] head teacher and colleagues. Reflective feedback adds quality to [my] practice.

> Meeting up with my mentor every two weeks is a great opportunity to discuss my teaching practice. It also motivates me to keep on track.

> [My] mentor [was] energised after the hui and [is enthusiastic about] being part of the pilot.

PRTs comments about their experience of clearer expectations, goals, and documentation included the following:

> [I have a] better understanding of what is expected.

> [I am engaged in] reflections and gathering evidence. [I use] the release time for folder work.

> [I am] getting others' feedback on my practice.

> [I am] trying to be more aware of teaching practice [and to] make conscious choices.

> [I have] discussions around goals in teams. Goals [are] visible and the [language is] professional.

> [I appreciate] having clearer guidelines to follow [with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*].

In addition, some PRTs found that they had been able to "use registration days to visit other ECE centres with their mentors". Several PRTs found that, through participating in the induction and mentoring pilot, they were becoming more confident and able to lead professional conversations in their ECE centres. An ECE centre-based PRT said:

> [I am able to participate in] policy development through professional discussions on topics like transition, ethics, and the rights of the child.

There were considerably fewer comments about "what was not working so well". The main issues and barriers PRTs identified were "finding time" and "understanding where evidence fits under the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*". Some PRTs working in ECE centres also mentioned not having regular or sufficiently frequent meetings with their mentors. Another issue for those working in ECE centres was how to apply specific draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* to teaching infants:

> I find it difficult to relate my work with the under-twos to the specific criteria.

There appears scope to consider this topic further in future induction and mentoring programmes that include participants from ECE centres.

The online network for PRTs

At the time of the July workshops, very few PRTs had accessed the pilot's online network. Some PRTs did not have access to computers outside of their kindergartens or ECE centres and this was a barrier to using the site.

Ruth Mansell led a session on the online network at the Wellington–Ruahine PRT workshop. None of the Wellington–Ruahine PRTs had used the site and most attributed this to lack of time. Ruth Mansell demonstrated the login procedure for the discussion forum and showed PRTs what happens on screen. PRTs thought that introducing a topic for discussion would generate a more dynamic and interactive online experience. The group proposed that PRTs' online discussions could focus on specific criteria from the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, for example.

Focus group findings

Two rounds of focus group interviews were conducted with selected mentors and PRTs in each of the three regions in the pilot programme. The first focus groups were held towards the end of the February 2009 regional workshops and follow-up focus groups took place at the July 2009 workshops. Participants were asked specific questions (see Appendix C); their answers are presented in this section of the report.

First round of focus groups: February

Following the first round of focus groups, members of the advisory group were alerted to participants' concerns about documentation requirements; namely confusion about the how the kindergarten professional standards, *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions,* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* fitted together. The intention was that these concerns would be addressed during the May workshops. The explanation provided to the advisory group included the following:

The *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* provide the framework for professional dialogue and practice. They are broad-based and cover critical aspects of teaching and learning. The dimensions and criteria are used to guide and assess PRTs towards full registration and registered teachers renewing their registration. They define the teaching profession and teaching practice. The same framework can be used for the appraisal process to reflect on teaching practice and identify professional development opportunities. Satisfactorily meeting these professional requirements will mean the professional standards in employment agreements are met. These are a narrow set of standards and used as a mechanism for progression through the salary scale.

Mentors' focus groups

At each of the three regional mentors' workshops in February, a 10-person focus group comprising mentors, head teachers, and ECE centre managers and supervisors participated in discussions around seven questions. Participants were selected by the local senior teachers to include representatives from each of the regional associations and, in Wellington–Ruahine, from NZCA.

Question One: What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

Mentors were clear that clarification about the purpose of the pilot programme and discussion of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* were important aspects of the first workshop:

> On day one, clarification of the pilot and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* [was most useful]. On day two, it was the motivating presentation and [the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* as] the structure of where we are going. [There is a] more cohesive direction for everyone [that comes] from hearing the same information. [All associations can] provide the same advice and guidance to PRTs.

Clarifying the role

Mentors discussed how the workshop was useful in clarifying the complexity of the mentoring role:

> [The first day of the workshop] gave me time to revisit what being a mentor means…Expectations are clearer now. The roles have never been really clear [before].

> [I was] never sure what my role was, and now I am.

> [The workshop is] an opportunity to reflect on what we are doing…on our mentoring practice. Often we're so busy doing it that we don't stop to reflect. A reflective journal [is useful]. I also found it useful to have [the facilitator's] information on theory to fit with the practice.

> Looking at coaching helps me working with the facilitation of Pasifika teachers. If knowledge is not there, it's a struggle and it affects performance. Listening to Kate [the facilitator] has reminded me to strengthen my facilitation skills. Sometimes I am more into coaching and there are times when the student's knowledge is not enough. This ties

in with the academic skills…with critical thinking. Is this the mentor's role or are there other people who need to help the teacher? This raises the issue of mentors needing mentors. [We need] someone there to ensure that [we] are on the right track. There are multi-skilled roles: facilitator, coach, and mentor.

Recognising knowledge gaps

Another useful aspect of the workshops was that mentors were able to identify gaps in their knowledge, skills, and dispositions as mentors:

> [This workshop] has brought clarity to the [mentoring] process. [It has created] a level playing field, so we know exactly what the expectations are. There are a couple of areas I'm not confident in, so I need to get professional development in these areas.

> It's made my goals clearer…helped me to see where my gaps are. There were no guidelines when I had a new registering teacher, no process for me as a mentor; there was a process for [my PRT], but not for me.

Networking

Across all regions, mentors also emphasised the benefits of the networking aspect of the workshop:

> It's good to know who else is a mentor…[and to know] that we can approach others for support. It was exciting to put faces to names [and to] get to know each other.

> Getting different ideas [is a benefit]. [It is valuable to be] networking with people with different experience as mentors, both new mentors and people who have been mentors for a while.

> Having collective support [is a benefit]. [The PRT workshops will be a good] opportunity for PRTs who have already done a year of registration [to share their knowledge and support]…year 1 PRTs.

Mentors also appreciated finding out more about themselves and others, including the PRTs:

> [The workshop] made me realise that I need to take more time out for my PRT. I need to talk to her about that.

> [I valued] finding out more about each other and ourselves and how we operate during the discussion time with [the facilitator].

Question Two: How do you expect these regional workshops to impact on your mentoring practice?

Mentors expected that the regional workshops would enhance their mentoring practice. They credited this improvement with: clarity about their role and more effective goal setting, better use of resources and documentation, more professional discussion, and working more collaboratively with PRTs.

On role clarification and goal setting, mentors said:

> [What] I learned yesterday has clarified my role [and showed me] how to set goals.

> [I have] strategies on how to set goals and [I know] how useful these are for PRTs and the whole team.

> [I am gaining] knowledge of the mentor role: self-review format, strategies, clarity of roles, and goal setting.

> [Practice is enhanced by] knowing why you are doing things: goals and actions.

On the use of documentation and resources, mentors said:

> Using resource books and tools and link to practice, greater knowledge of documents that guide practice and how to use them to support teacher development and linking them together.

On how they were empowered and stimulated to have more professional discussions, mentors said:

> [Participation in the workshops] will promote more professional discussion in teams, supporting [us in] knowing "why we do what we do". [It will help us feel] empowered to go on with the mentor role and more confident.

> [We are empowered by] the collective idea that we must build mentoring teachers and [by knowing] that we are not on our own.

> [This is] a new process, [so it is valuable to have] a framework for new mentors to know what they need to do. [I] feel more supported as a first-time mentor.

On how they are building more shared understanding with PRTs to promote collaboration, mentors said:

> [I have] strategies, such as reflective questions, to use when mentoring and when with PRTs.

> [I have] set up guidelines on how [my PRT and I] are going to work together, with time frames, rules, framework, and conflict resolution.

> Learning together with the PRT—being on the same page—sets the tone for co-construction [in a mentor–PRT pair].

Question Three: How useful do you expect the Draft Guidelines *will be in leading PRTs to full registration?*

Responding in detail to this question in February 2009 was difficult for the mentors because the *Draft Guidelines* were new to almost all of them. One mentor said:

> It is difficult [to comment] because we only got [the *Draft Guidelines*] yesterday. [We] didn't know they existed prior [to the workshop].

However, mentors were able to provide some thoughtful preliminary responses. It was clear that it would be useful to follow up this question as part of the July focus groups and to document any change over time.

Mentors' initial response to the *Draft Guidelines* was favourable:

> The underlying statements are interesting. [They] sum up the whole process and give it a direction.

> [The vision statement and the *Draft Guidelines* in general] hint at some structure, where (previously) we have been led to believe that we just float along. In our association, there are no programmes for mentor teachers; PRTs meet once a term. We hope there will be workshops [on an ongoing basis].

> One national [set of] guidelines could be useful and effective.

> [The *Draft Guidelines*] seem to be more succinct and will be easier to follow.

Some groups of mentors discussed the relevance of the *Draft Guidelines* to ECE services. They suggested that the *Draft Guidelines* need to be appropriate for PRTs who are already experienced ECE teachers:

> Is this just for recently qualified teachers, because we have people coming back? The vision statement [mentions "recently qualified teaching graduates"], but in an early childhood context, we have other [types of] teachers registering. Maybe the *Draft Guidelines* should say "people requiring registration". The majority of my [PRTs] have been teaching for some time. [The *Draft Guidelines*] need to cover everyone who is registering. If they are guidelines shouldn't they be *really* useful?

Mentors noted that the vision, purpose, and criteria of the programme are clear (*Draft Guidelines*, 5.1–5.5) and that the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed for effective mentoring are appropriately specific (*Draft Guidelines* 7.1–7.2):

> [Draft *Registered Teacher Guidelines* 5] makes it clear what the programme is about.

> [Draft *Registered Teacher Guidelines* 7] gives a clear list of what you need to do. [You] can match your skills up and work on future development.

However, some mentors from kindergartens were concerned about how the *Draft Guidelines* would be implemented in "stand-alone" early childhood education and care centres:

> In stand-alone ECE centres, how do mentors and PRTs find out about the process? How will this be addressed in the *Draft Guidelines*? How will teachers be supported?

> There is nowhere to go if you are a mentor in a stand-alone, private, or community-based ECE centre. What kind of support is available to them?

> How are "suitable" mentors chosen within the stand-alone ECE centres and who monitors this? In private ECE centres, who will ensure appropriate mentors are available?

Question Four: How useful do you expect the Draft Guidelines *will be for mentor development and quality mentoring?*

Mentors commented favourably on the *Draft Guidelines'* clarification of their role:

> [The *Draft Guidelines* sets] clear…expectations to management. [It will mean that] professional development plans can be designed easily.

> [The *Draft Guidelines* is] a good reflection tool for mentors. [It] tells us a lot about what we should be; [it helps us] lift our game.

> [The *Draft Guidelines* provides] a framework for giving feedback; [it is] quite specific. It will [provide] a lot of support for mentors; we haven't had this in the past. It is a good document to refer to if [you are] not sure what to do as a new mentor. It provides a clear checklist [for mentors]. [It will help deliver] more consistent, fair, and transparent mentoring and better quality mentoring for all PRTs. Having indicators of mentoring roles for both mentors and PRTs [will help] PRTs know what they can expect of their mentor and vice versa; [it provides] shared understandings of roles.

> [On page 5 and 6 of the *Draft Guidelines*]: 5.6 looks good; high-quality support for that role is lacking for us and [we] lack [sufficient] time.

However, mentors emphasised the importance of continued support to enhance their effectiveness:

> Where will mentors get training and support after the pilot programme finishes?

> Incoming mentors will need the training the pilot is providing. There is a need for a process for mentor support.

Selecting mentors

There was some concern about the present and future processes for selection of mentors in ECE, both in kindergartens and in early childhood education and care centres:

Selection seems to be by chance at the moment. [As a kindergarten head teacher] you are put in that position by having a new teacher. We don't get a choice; if we are a head teacher we just have to [take on the mentoring role].

[The *Draft Guidelines*] sounds good; mentors need to be carefully selected [and receive] high-quality support.

My main support is for Pasifika PRTs. ECE centres are not always licensed. How will the mentors be selected?

[*Draft Guidelines*, 7.1–7.2] could make the [Kindergarten] Association more accountable and [more aware of] the importance of ongoing support.

[When the kindergarten head teacher is required to be a mentor of PRTs], this could influence the appointment process [such that] you may not want to have a new graduate.

In the childcare sector, people often say that they will do [mentoring], but they don't do it. The idea of developing our programme is to have consistency.

Question Five: What do you, as mentors, expect of the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme?

Online network

When prompted to discuss the pilot programme's proposed online network for mentors and PRTs, most mentors responded favourably. They commented that they would need to take responsibility for the community and that using online resources would build their confidence and develop their Information Communication Technology skills:

We mentors will have to take responsibility to make [the online community] work. It cannot be the expectation that the senior teachers [in the pilot] will take responsibility for that; we have to drive it ourselves.

[It will] build our confidence to use Information Communication Technology…[and build] trust. With support from other mentors, [it will be] a way to "work smart" with our time. [It will be] a good way to clarify something; a good tool.

Mentors also noted some relevant cautions and constraints:

People need to be aware that the written word can be misinterpreted. You would have to think carefully about what you put on. We can interpret documents differently.

There needs to be a contract or code of conduct.

Mentors' expected the online network to be "up-and-running soon" and for it to include "someone to answer our questions" (such as someone with a "Council perspective" to contribute to online discussions). Mentors also said that they would appreciate receiving "emailed reminders to check out

the site or a prompt to look into new information that has been posted". The network should be "password protected so only people in the pilot have access to the discussions".

Combined mentor–PRT workshops

Mentors responded favourably to the combined mentor–PRT workshops. They expected that this would lead to further shared understanding of the induction and mentoring processes:

> [It is] good to have workshops together, so there's time together to focus on the process. [We are] both looking forward to [returning to the kindergarten and] having systems in place, such as regular meetings and opportunities for feedback, setting aside time, setting goals, and establishing those conversation starters that lead to meaningful dialogue.

> I have a clearer idea of my role. I can put things in place for my PRT better than I could last year.

Potential barriers

Mentors talked about potential barriers to effective mentoring in ECE contexts. They mentioned accountability issues, the need for specific training in observation skills, and issues related to the number of PRTs per mentor in kindergartens:

> There needs to be accountability for mentor training and support, just as there is for PRTs and their progress. [Having multiple] PRTs per mentor can be an issue; primary teachers have a position on this, but ECE does not.

> More release time is needed for mentors, so that the demands and expectations of the role do not impact on other tasks.

> Meeting the requirements of being a mentor teacher within the demands of our head teacher role [can be a challenge].

Question Six: How do you expect the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme to impact on the PRTs' teaching practice?

The mentors were very positive about the likely impact of the pilot programme on PRTs' teaching and self-review processes. They commented that PRTs will be more informed about what to expect and more aware of what induction and mentoring support they are entitled to, both in kindergartens and in private ECE centres:

> [The pilot] can only enhance [PRT teaching practice] by [giving PRTs] a clearer understanding of what's expected of them [and getting us all] on the same page with appraisal.

> [The pilot] is meaningful for the whole team.

[PRTs] can ask: "How can I achieve this? Is what I am doing okay?

Sharing is really important. [My PRT and I] talked about sharing as a goal. It is really exciting.

[The pilot is contributing to] empowerment of PRTs and [enhancing] their knowledge. Self-review and appraisal [now] link together.

[The pilot] makes self-review understandable.

The PRTs will know the process. We won't be stuck in a process that we can't change.

Question Seven: Is there anything you would like to see done differently at the next regional workshop for mentors?

It has been very good so far. The guest speaker was phenomenal. It has been well balanced and we [should] have more of the same.

Most mentor participants found the structure of the workshops appropriate. Providing a balance between mentor-only meetings and combined mentor–PRT sessions was deemed important across all regions:

There needs to be time to separate for discussion [as well as] time together for shared learning. It's good to have a forum separate from PRTs, [but there] needs to be a balance.

These discussions provided detailed feedback that the pilot programme teams incorporated into their planning for the May regional workshops. It was recommended that these workshops include sessions on online discussion and also provide opportunities for in-depth sharing across the associations represented within each region.

PRTs' focus groups

At each of the three regional PRTs' workshops in February, a focus group comprising 10 PRTs participated in discussions around six questions. Participants were selected by the local senior teachers to reflect the diversity of PRTs in ECE in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Question One: What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

The PRTs were very positive about the workshops:

If you ran a workshop like this regularly for new registering teachers, it would be fantastic.

The aspects of the workshop that the PRTs found most useful were: learning about the pilot programme, the process of registration, and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*; and discussing

relevant documentation and goal setting. Networking and spending time learning with their mentors was also important to PRTs from all regions.

Learning about the pilot and registration

Like the mentors, the PRTs appreciated the clarity of the information they received about the pilot programme. They also saw great value in information about the process of registration and related expectations:

> Learning about the process of registration, the different criteria, the dimensions, and how things fit together [was very useful].

> Today has been helpful to give an idea of what's expected.

> [The information provided about registration] has helped to motivate me into this process.

The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

For all participants, getting information about the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* was important. Most found the workshop very useful for this and expressed positive reactions to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*:

> I felt I was thrown into the other method and had to hit the ground running. Seeing it all today was really useful.

> This process seems clearer and more useful compared to the old one.

> Going through the [draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*] helps me to remember parts of my registration.

> [The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*] is a lot easier to follow than the professional standards; [it is] clearer, more aligned with ECE philosophy, [and a] lot more holistic.

In one region, the PRTs took part in the focus group relatively early on the day of their workshop. These PRTs indicated that they needed more information about applying the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. One said, "[It is] difficult to know what documentation goes with which criterion".

Documentation and goal setting

PRTs were interested in learning more about the practical processes involved in meeting the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and in preparing for registration, particularly with regard to appropriate documentation. They identified the following aspects of the workshops as very useful:

- learning about goal setting tools and resources
- working with the information and tool kit together with mentors
- studying the documentation in other PRTs' folders

- sharing ideas and appreciating that everyone embarks on this process differently and has their own style.

Networking

PRTs appreciated meeting other PRTs and finding out about support networks. They noted that the opportunity for mentors and PRTs to explore new information together was particularly useful:

> Knowing there are good support networks out there—meaning each others' mentors and the senior teachers—and knowing there are many others in the same boat as you and you're not alone [was valuable]. Meeting mentees from different places and at different stages [of the mentoring process was good, too].

> I was able to a develop a deeper relationship with my mentor.

> [Having the] mentor and PRT together, finding out information together, and starting to process the information together [was great]. [It was useful to be] all hearing the same messages at the same time.

> Dialogue was great for the transformation of the information.

> [I appreciated the] face-to-face dialogue.

> The professional discussion about what we actually do as teachers in practice has been helpful.

> Just getting together as a group with the mentors to get views from all the other professionals [has been useful]. They have different experiences to ours [as PRTs].

Question Two: How do you expect these regional workshops to impact on your teaching practice?

PRTs said they expected their teaching practice to be improved as a result of the workshops. They specifically expected to engage in more reflection and to improve their goal setting, to be more professional, and to work more collaboratively with their mentors. PRTs said that a better understanding of mentoring would improve their relationship with their mentors and have a positive impact on their teaching practice:

More reflection and enhanced goal setting

> [The workshop has] made me think about what I'm doing and [about] connecting [what I'm doing] to my registration; [it has] increased my awareness. [It has shown me] connections between teaching and registration.

> [The workshop] will help me to really reflect and examine what I do, instead of just going with the flow. [It has provided] more guidance.

I like the way the systems have been made to fit into each other. They link together so there is not a lot of extra work.

By setting goals, we will be focusing on different areas and it will help us see deficits.

Self-reflection and excitement will continue and be maintained [after the workshop].

Increased professionalism

[The workshop] makes us accountable; not only [to] children, teachers, [and] community…we can justify [our role].

[When you]…document stuff that you have been doing—validating your role—[it is] a huge pat on the back. [The workshops] show the importance of documentation.

Impact on mentor relationship

[The workshop has] raised awareness of the importance of the PRT and mentor [collaborating]. It needs the support of everyone to make [teacher registration] work.

We hear comments from mentors that it is up to the PRTs to do the work. This is helping to clarify the mentor's role for PRTs.

Gaining joint understanding [with mentors] of what the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* are about [is valuable]. [Having a] joint understanding of the terminology will help [because] people can have different interpretations.

Question Three: What do you, as PRTs, expect of the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme overall?

The PRTs main expectation of the pilot programme was that they would be fully prepared for registration:

It won't be a shock when I get to the end [and am] being signed off. I hope all the workshops will prepare me [for this]. [More specifically], I won't have any gaps because those things will have been talked about along the way.

With support and motivation, I expect to become a fully registered teacher.

[I expect] that [PRTs] all over the country will have good programmes from 2010.

Online network

When prompted to discuss the pilot programme's proposed online network, the PRTs, like the mentors, were strongly supportive of its likely benefits:

A great tool. I need to get into the habit of using it.

It would be useful if you wanted to find a particular reading or research. [You] could go online and someone might know it and help you find it.

[The online network] will support motivation and be a trigger—a great tool for pooling ideas and sharing articles, for instance. [It will be] really valuable for the rural kindergartens.

Online [discussions] can sometimes be deeper than you would possibly have face-to-face. [Online discussion] embraces multiple perspectives and draws everyone in and is non-threatening and easier than you think.

However, some PRTs were concerned about time constraints:

At the moment, it would be a time issue for me. It is new. It will become part of my programme, but at the moment it feels like just an extra thing. I can see it will be a great tool, [but I].need to find time to [use] it.

PRTs specified that the online network would need to be user-friendly and password protected. They expected that online etiquette and respect for others would be important. PRTs requested that an experienced person be available online to provide accurate information on registration in response to their questions. These suggestions and requests were useful for future planning.

Mentor–PRT relationships

Across the regions, PRTs expressed specific expectations about their relationship with their mentor:

I expect there to be some kind of commitment from both parties and, if it isn't working, that we can seek help to improve.

The mentor can clarify things you are not sure of fairly promptly, so you're not floundering around.

You want [your mentor] to be supportive, but not take over your goal.

It's a balance. You don't want to get to the end and [have gaps because] your mentor hasn't done their job.

[It would be] good to have a template for discussions with mentors [to help clarify our roles].

[You should expect to get] increased support if you are worried. The [mentoring] model [should] offer…guidance in how to interpret the [draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*] and [provide] support if there is a breakdown in the relationship. The programme should enable discussion to take place.

It's about knowing what your rights are. I had a mentor who did not want to have formal meetings, but I did not know that I had a right to ask for meetings.

Question Four: How do you expect the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme to impact on your teaching practice?

Effective teachers for diverse learners

In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become effective teachers for diverse learners" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4), PRTs emphasised that their teaching should benefit children. In part, this can be achieved by promoting a community of reflective learners and teachers:

> [The pilot programme will prompt us to be] thinking more of the children: it comes down to how reflective you are [and] perhaps motivation towards your goals.

> [The pilot will provide] opportunities to observe and take on different strategies.

> [The pilot will help us in] recognising that we're a collective group [of PRTs], but we'll do things individually. [We] celebrate diversity. [We are] in our own small community of learners.

> [The pilot will impact on our ability to] set goals and [engage in] reflection. [It will provide] opportunities to observe and take on different strategies. We are diverse learners, as are children. We are communities of learners.

Professionally engaged teachers

In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4), PRTs again discussed the importance of reflective practice and of making changes to their practice with support from their mentors:

> [It's about] work ethic…[about] continuing to be reflective and the importance of it. Being part of this is really important for lifelong learners and for the children—[we have] to take it seriously.

> It's easy to get "ho-hum" in your practice. Hopefully being in this pilot you are re-engaging and you're not alone: your mentor is also participating and growing too.

> Having a mentor helps motivate you; they also care about your progress. [They] promote your professional growth as a teacher and it's reciprocal.

> It's easy to become isolated in your kindergarten; small teams, big workload. [Through] ongoing inquiry [you are motivated] to open up and keep going; you get excited, you articulate what you strongly believe in, and [you] network with others for those different points of viewsthat are good for you.

PRTs expected that receiving regular non-threatening feedback on their teaching practice would be useful:

> It makes it safe for us. It is a safe way to reflect on your practice and see where you can go from here.

> [I appreciate] getting regular feedback on my practice.

> [Using an outside mentor] to get a different perspective from outside the ECE centre [would give you] a bit of distance [and be more] non-judgemental [because they are] not directly involved [and there is less] emotion.

> [Feedback is] a better indicator for self-review. [I have] a better idea of how self-review works.

> [Feedback gives you] exposure to different teaching strategies.

PRTs in some regions commented favourably on how the induction and mentoring pilot would offer continuing challenges and stimulation. They expected that using the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* would enhance their teaching practice:

> [The pilot promotes] ongoing enquiry. Using the documents helps [us] focus on everyday practice.

> [The pilot will] take us out of our comfort zones. [It will make] you stretch yourself to try things that aren't your strength.

> [The pilot continues] your learning journey. [Even though] you're finished training you should continue to learn and seek new knowledge.

> It's great that we are bringing together the [draft] *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the professional standards. It adds to our status as teachers, as we are being judged by the same criteria.

Question Five: Is there anything you would like to see done differently at the next regional workshop for PRTs?

In general, the PRTs were positive; they requested relatively few changes. PRTs wanted more time to work on goal setting, self-review, and evidence logs, with support from mentors, senior teachers, and other experienced participants.

Comments specific to each region were taken into consideration when planning the May regional workshops. Some suggestions within the regions included, for example: more partnership with tertiary and primary sectors, further clarification of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, changes to the physical layout of the venue, and more balance between whole-group and small-group discussion.

Question Six: Is there anything else you would like to say about the regional workshops or the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme overall?

The regional workshops

Overall, PRTs expressed enthusiasm about the workshops and related processes:

> [The workshops have] given me a clearer idea of the expectations of the programme.

> I'm looking forward to more opportunities for networking and professional discussions.

> This is my first look at teacher registration. It is great to hear about this and it is helpful that it links together.

> [The workshops have] given me the bigger picture of what I need to do. [I am not just] putting bits of paper aside and not doing it.

> It was good to open my folder and go through it. That has been really helpful.

> The paperwork can be overwhelming, but today helped. I love the new [draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*]. It is easier to read.

> [The workshops have] given me a clearer picture…a starting point, a process to follow.

> The workshop really explained where we're going and what is expected.

> Having hands-on experience [of going online] to the Council website was really useful. I'd never been there before.

> Participants come away [knowing that we are] part of this and that we're party to shaping the future for other teachers.

The ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme

Many PRTs expressed their support for the pilot programme:

> We feel valued and lucky to be part of this.

> We're proud to be part of an association that wants to be up there as the best. The induction and mentoring pilot programme indicates that kindergartens want to continue to be leaders in the ECE field.

However, some second-year PRTs had concerns about continuity of documentation and requirements:

> [It is now] much simpler. [But] what do I do with last year's process, having [just] been told to park it?

Why are the professional standards [in employment agreements] different from the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* requirements of the Council? PRTs in the pilot will be following the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* for their registration. What does this mean for PRTs in their second year? Do they change to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* when they have been working to the *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions*?

[We should] simplify the registration process for both teachers and mentors. It could be that focus groups could contribute to making the future registration process more straightforward.

Follow-up focus groups: July

The follow-up focus groups took place at the July 2009 workshops. Findings from all six follow-up focus groups were shared with the Council to aid in the proposed revision of the *Draft Guidelines*.

Mentors' focus groups

The three mentors follow-up focus groups were held during the mentors national workshop/hui. The mentors who had attended the first focus groups were again invited, with between seven and 10 attending each session. Mentors were asked similar questions to those presented in February, with an emphasis on any changes to their mentoring and teaching practices over time and on the effectiveness of the pilot programme.

Question One: What are you finding most useful at this workshop?

Networking

Mentors confirmed that networking and sharing experiences were of major importance. Listening to, and reflecting on, other people's perspectives generated learning opportunities:

[It was] great hearing other people's thinking; it makes you reshape where you are at. People [reported] back from other groups. [We were] taking [new] ideas on board. Chatting with others, in small groups or one-to-one, about practicalities, especially issues and how troubles are resolved, [was valuable]. Discussing issues in small groups brings the focus back.

Discussion times with other mentors were valuable. We have similar issues and this gives us common ground to start with. Reflection time after each session was helpful on the first day. [It is better to be] bouncing ideas off each other rather than just sitting and listening. All the discussion through the workshop made the mentor role more human…more real.

This July workshop was the first national-level meeting for mentors. They particularly appreciated the chance to communicate with colleagues from different services and regions:

Networking across and within regions, and with NZCA mentors [was useful].

Networking with the wider scope of associations…and with teachers within our own association [was useful].

It was useful to meet with Nelson teachers who are working with ECE centres outside of the kindergarten associations and to network with NZCA mentors.

[It was good to connect with] a kindergarten that uses the same model as we do (namely a 7.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. day).

[It was useful for] Te Tari Puna Ora mentors to meet with the Nelson mentors who work alongside education and care PRTs.

[The most valuable aspects of the workshop were] meeting other mentors, sharing ideas, live-in immersion into the topic, and having discussions with other mentors outside of meeting times.

Speakers

There were favourable comments about "having the Council here to clarify the registration process", including:

The explanations from this presenter (Deborah Wansbrough) were really clear.

The Powerpoint® presentation presented at the workshop by the Council would be useful if available on the Council website and circulated widely.

Mentors also appreciated hearing from a small group if newly registered teachers:

The three newly registered teachers [shared] useful information to take back to the whole team, as well as to the PRTs.

[The newly registered teachers presented] lots of very relevant and useful information and strategies. This was valuable personally and professionally as mentors.

Awareness of mentoring role

At the February workshops, mentors had found "role clarification" helpful. By July (at the third workshop and second focus group discussion), they appreciated having their awareness of the role heightened further at a session hosted by Dr Janis Carroll-Lind, from the Office of the Children's Commissioner:

[This workshop] has made [us] more conscious of the [mentoring] role…[of the need to] set times and [engage more in] time [management], for example. Ironically, some of the mentors didn't go through registration [themselves], so have nothing to refer back to.

[The workshop] was useful for "unpacking" [issues] and [understanding that] making time for the role…is important [for PRTs and mentors]. [It was good to be reminded to make] time for PRTs by scheduling meetings and leaving the phone off during these meetings.

"Unpacking" the *Draft Guidelines*

Mentors described how they found it valuable to refer back to the wording of the *Draft Guidelines*:

That session really focused us on our role…focused us for the future.

Some of the "unpacking" of the wording of the *Draft Guidelines* (such as "consistently" and "outstanding") was useful.

That word "outstanding" is a bit too much for me [in this context].

The online network

Mentors appreciated learning about how to use the online network:

[I can see] the potential for the online community following the demonstration.

[The workshop presented] a good mix between the practical, [how to use the online network, for example], and the theoretical, [such as,] what makes a good mentor, [for us] to go away and reflect on.

Question Two: To what extent and in what ways is attendance at the workshops changing your mentoring practice?

Mentors from all three groups said that their mentoring practice had changed as a result of the workshops. They now better understood their role and had strategies for responding to their PRTs as diverse learners.

Mentors also commented on different strategies they had introduced as a consequence of participating in the workshops. These included: changing the kindergarten roster in order to spend more time with the PRT; modelling practice; making time to give instant feedback and remind PRTs of the value of what they have done; encouraging PRTs to slow down; doing learning stories with and on the PRT; and tying these learning stories into the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

All of the mentors appreciated learning together and alongside PRTs at the regional workshops. Mentors in Dunedin–Southland also found links with mentors in primary schools to be of value. A primary school teacher attended their May workshop to talk about her role:

Attending workshops with the PRTs [has been valuable]. PRTs have been empowered with knowledge of expectations for registration and this makes it easier [for us] to work together. It's empowering to know that you are on the right path.

Mentors also commented that the number and timing of the workshops was appropriate for learning and reflection:

> It's good to have had the three workshops [February, May, and July]. There's time in between workshops to follow up information from the workshops and to discuss what we've been doing.

Role clarity

The workshops provided clarification of the mentors' role and this was useful in developing the relationship between mentors and PRTs:

> [The workshops] helped us understand our mentor role better. They helped the mentors and PRTs formalise that part of our relationship and we now have a clearer idea of our roles and clear expectations.

> Coming to these [workshops] has been useful as our role can be a lonely one. There can be other ways of doing things and saying things. It's been good hearing other mentors and listening to others.

> [Attending the workshops] has made us mentors more reflective.

> [The workshops have] given me direction [and this] has benefited both [me and my PRT]. Before [the pilot programme], we hoped we were doing the right thing, but now we have clear direction.

> This clear direction is so much easier to follow.

> [We have had] fantastic speakers; we've gone back inspired and wanting to get on with [our mentoring role].

> I feel much more confident in the role because some of the speakers explained their systems and experience as mentors.

> We feel more empowered by the support at this hui.

Responding to PRTs as diverse learners

Mentors stated that the workshops helped them to relate to PRTs more appropriately and respond to them in ways that help facilitate their professional learning:

> [I am now better at] responding to the diversity of the teachers I am mentoring; at listening and not judging.

> [I now know about] getting PRTs to slow down and ensuring that they are not overloaded. [I tell them] that everything doesn't have to be done at once…that registration is a two-year process.

[With mature Pasifika PRTs] it involves lots and lots of respect....I reflected and I turned back to my Pasifika values and applied positive role models. Guiding [is preferable to] directing. I urged them not to slow down but gently pushed them along to bring their teaching and documenting up to the next level. I was impressed with [how they were] creating their portfolios. So this really helped.

When a PRT has been teaching for a long time and is now starting registration, it can be scary putting your "thinking hat" back on rather than your "doing hat".

One good thing is [exploring] different situations and approaches.

The emphasis is on the word "with": mentoring "with" the PRTs not on the PRTs.

[I am now] giving instant feedback. [I am using] photos as part of the feedback to PRTs.

Mentors from Dunedin–Southland commented that information about learning styles presented at the first workshop by Kirsty Prince of Learning and Professional Development Ltd had helped with their subsequent mentoring strategies:

Kirsty Prince's system was a really good start to looking at perspectives and types of characteristics…it was fantastic getting to know your colleagues [better].

I appreciated Kirsty's workshop, which presented different strategies for questioning and meetings. Our association now uses some of this workshop stuff in its induction process and for building new teams.

Draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

Mentors found that learning more about applying the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* made a useful contribution to their mentoring practice:

The new draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* is much better [at showing us] where we are going, what is observable, and what you can take from practice and in the programme. The observations are no longer airy-fairy; they're much more specific.

Question Three: To what extent are the regional workshops impacting on the PRTs' teaching practice?

There was agreement within and across the groups of mentors that the workshops were influencing PRTs' teaching. Mentors mentioned increased professional discussions with their PRTs, especially about the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria,* and PRTs' increased confidence, willingness to seek feedback, and enhanced documentation skills:

Professional discussions

[The workshops have] opened up professional discussions on the whole of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. It has probably put the whole process on a more reciprocal relationship; mentor and PRT learn from each other.

The PRTs have talked about networking and sharing with the team after the workshops. There is feedback from the different pilot workshops attended.

Empowered and reassured, [PRTs have clear] expectations about the registration process.

[Attending the workshops] helps [the PRTs] to stay focused and gives them more to work on. My PRT has enjoyed sharing the information and bringing it back to the kindergarten.

We have clear expectations. They [previously] thought that they needed to do lots and lots, [but] now we are working alongside each other.

Increased confidence

PRTs are more confident; they know their rights. They engage in more professional dialogue and debate.

The regional workshops are very supportive of the PRTs. They come back with loads of ideas. They come back more resourceful and confident about finding information and networking, using [the internet and the pilot programme's online] network, for example. [The workshops have] helped the PRTs understand that it's a two-year process and they've got two years to get there—[there is no need to] panic or rush.

There's more give and take in the feedback process. [There is] more professional discussion and debate among the PRTs, perhaps, and within teams. More "feed-forward" and feedback is taking place. The PRTs are taking turns in leading this.

Documentation skills and reflection

The PRTs now seem really focused on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*—it [encourages them to have a] clear direction [rather than] just to set a goal. The PRTs have learnt more about the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* through the workshops and then have been able to set specific goals.

[The workshops] are helping [my Pasifika PRTs enhance their] documentation skills and supporting them to become reflective teachers… Reflection is not really us. But now we are doing it every day. [My PRTs] now are reflective teachers and they know how to reflect.

[My PRTs] are reflecting on teaching as it happens daily. They're reflective teachers.

The PRTs know what they are doing; they know what constitutes evidence. They're more proactive in their practice, in asking for help, and looking for evidence they can use.

[The PRTs] reflect more. They are reaching out for feedback on their practice from colleagues more [often] and [asking] for input from other team members. Other teachers in their teams are reflecting more as a result.

Question Four: How useful are the Draft Guidelines in leading to PRTs' full registration?

Mentors commented that the *Draft Guidelines* provide a potentially useful focus for PRTs. They also spoke about the usefulness of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* for PRTs working towards registration.

Effective teachers for diverse learners

In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become effective teachers for diverse learners" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4), mentors said:

The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* tease this out. It gets PRTs thinking about what they're doing. As mentors, it's up to us to ask challenging questions about effectiveness and diverse learners…questions such as: "What is an effective teacher for diverse learners?" "Do the PRTs know [what these] words [mean]?" It creates discussion with PRTs. There isn't one answer.

[The *Draft Guidelines*] encourage teachers who have newly graduated to keep learning and keep reflecting on their practice. The *Draft Guidelines*, draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, and the registration process help shape the expectations, more so than the standards [in employment agreements].

PRTs have a more organised portfolio [and] more reference points than in the past.

[The *Draft Guidelines* provide] clear guidelines and expectations.

The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* are used more than the *Draft Guidelines* in everyday practice and reflection.

The PRTs are taking more notice of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*…by using the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, the *Draft Guidelines* are being covered.

Professionally engaged teachers

In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4) one mentor said:

> [The *Draft Guidelines*] helps them focus and sets them up for reflection. It's all about reflection; the system gives them the opportunity to talk about it rather than stew about it…the system is for good times and bad times. It's good that they've got other PRTs to access.

Question Five: How useful are the Draft Guidelines *for mentor development and quality mentoring?*

Mentors from all groups described the *Draft Guidelines* as useful in providing role clarity:

> [We have used the *Draft Guidelines*] as a reference…as a job description. In the past, [knowing what to do] as a mentor was a "stab in the dark". [Our documentation] wasn't as specific…it focused on registering the teacher, but it was all about signing things off. It wasn't really about being a really good teacher.

Mentors also expressed enthusiasm for *Draft Guidelines* 6.2. This section, which defines the role of the mentor, was seen as particularly helpful to guide mentors' day-to-day mentoring practice:

> Some [of the *Draft Guidelines*] are useful. Section 6.2 sums it up beautifully. [It gives us] the practical stuff.

> [I like that] it's just a guideline, not too prescriptive.

> The *Draft Guidelines* seem less clear than the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*; some of the *Draft Guidelines* are too wordy, but section 6.2 is very clear.

Mentors from several groups commended the *Draft Guidelines'* focus on quality teaching and learning:

> The new stuff has an emphasis on teaching. It strengthens us professionally. It makes us aware of our own teaching practice.

> Reflecting on the *Draft Guidelines* makes mentors and PRTs more aware of what we are doing.

> [The *Draft Guidelines*] is making us "step up". It [encourages] collegial discussions. I think the PRTs are inspirational as well; they want to learn and they want to get involved. [Being a mentor] helps you realise that we're very lucky to have them—and it takes you back to your first days of teaching. PRTs challenge you and make you think.

> We need to encourage PRTs to see registration as an achievement and a celebration— registration isn't a right; it's a process and requires professional time.

The *Draft Guidelines* remind mentors of our own learning and professional development. They keep us on track.

[The *Draft Guidelines*] remind us of the professional development we have to do to be able to be "consistent".

Question Six: Would you recommend any changes to the Draft Guidelines*?*

Mentors made positive comments about the content and layout of the *Draft Guidelines.* The vision statements were seen as being important to focus on and the bullet points promoted clarity.

All three groups had some suggestions for changes. These were: include more emphasis on shared learning and co-construction, limit the use of jargon, and provide the *Draft Guidelines* in both te reo Māori and English. Mentor comments included:

We would like more emphasis on partnership and shared learning; more emphasis on working "with" the PRTs.

We would like to see less jargon, and [for the document to be] more user-friendly.

Some of the wording needs clarification. For example: "consistently", "change agent", "outstanding", "educative", "handy, just-in-time tips". We want to know what these mean! [Terms need] to be defined before they can be "unpacked".

Modify the "outstanding" statement.

The first parts need to be condensed. The terminology can be obscure.

The *Draft Guidelines* needs to be in both languages: te reo Māori and English. ECE has a strong bicultural focus.

PRTs' focus groups

The PRTs' follow-up focus groups took place during the three regional PRT workshops in July. The PRTs who had attended in February were again invited, with between eight and 10 PRTs attending each session. PRTs were asked about changes to their practice and the extent to which their expectations were being met by the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme.

Question One: What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

As in February, the PRTs' comments about the workshop were overwhelmingly positive. PRT groups from all regions appreciated the opportunity to learn new ideas, hear from motivational speakers, network with other PRTs, and practice useful skills like giving feedback:

[We were] motivated to go back and have a lot more energy and be a positive, energetic teacher.

Hearing from everyone [is useful] as we all come from different backgrounds and areas. [It's good to] hear other PRTs' opinions and get to know other PRTs. [It's] nice to come back and see the same people. [We appreciate] being able to ask people about things and know that we are not alone on this journey; realising that others have the same worries, for example, "Am I doing it right? Have I done enough?"

Learning and practicing "feedback and reflection" [is useful]. It has made us more aware of reflective practice and how important this is.

[Focusing on feedback and reflection has] made us even more aware of where we are at.

[Being] given more tools——actual questions to ask——[is useful]. To have really good reflective practice we need…trust, honesty, respect, and flexibility [in our relationships].

[I found the] interactive approach [useful]: being informal, having the ability to give feedback, not being told but being involved. [It is] nice to have interactive things happening, not [to be] just sitting.

Other useful experiences mentioned by the PRTs were related to the specific content of each regional workshop. These included motivational speakers affirming the value of teaching and "unpacking" and discussing the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

Draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

One of the regional workshops focused on "unpacking" the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. PRT comments included:

Discussing the [draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*] in the small groups and focusing on putting the criteria into practice [was useful].

[It was useful to discuss] what the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* would look like in practice.

I found the discussion in small groups useful; I'm more confident about sharing in small groups than later in the large group.

[I appreciated] the use of humour in the discussion groups.

Overall, [focusing on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*] has been useful in [reducing my anxiety]; [I am] feeling less scared about registration…not so nervous. [The registration requirements are] becoming clearer. [They are becoming] something we talk about all the time.

[It is useful to] narrow the goals down to something smaller and more manageable.

[In my] first year as a PRT, [the requirements were not clear]. This year, the workshops have provided us with the opportunity to talk more about the registration process and about the evidence needed.

Question Two: To what extent and in what ways are these regional workshops changing your teaching practice?

PRTs said the collegial support they gained at the workshops was important to their teaching practice. They found that participation in the workshops led to continued learning and reflection and improved goal setting and documentation:

Collegial support

> Understanding you're not alone—that there's collegial support—[is important]. When you are working in a team [in which the] others have all been working for years, it is great to talk with other teachers on the journey…I have relaxed more; I have honest conversations with others who share similar challenges. I am allowing myself to be on the learning journey.

> Having the mentors and PRTs participating in workshops has facilitated more discussion between mentors and PRTs about registration. [There is] better awareness of how mentors can support PRTs.

> [I am] becoming more confident in discussions. My mentor gives me good feedback as a result of the workshops. The mentors' involvement in the pilot is supporting the mentors in their role and this supports me.

> It's good to develop relationships with colleagues outside of our association. We're now texting each other.

> [The PRTs in my ECE centre have decided] to take time to sit down together to talk and share teaching and documentation experiences.

Continued learning and reflection

> It's still important to be doing reflective journeys even though we've finished study. Continuing reflective journals and practice is important.

> [The workshops have] given me, through discussion, another perspective and changed my teaching practice. They give me other alternatives, through reflection on others' comments and thoughts, not just the mentors or team members.

Goal setting and documentation

> [I leave] these workshops with a challenge for myself to achieve, [for example,] seeking feedback, or making time to sit and talk to each other.

> You have your overall practice goals, but these [workshops] promote process goals, different goals, which I really like. [When you have] process goals, more things unlock.

> [The workshops have] changed how I look at my folder and how I link the evidence.

I've reorganised my folder, linking evidence to more than one area of practice, and to more than one of the criteria [in the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*].

[I am] gaining confidence in talking with others about my teaching practice.

It's good to get different ideas and [the workshops have] made me think of different ways to do things [and think more about my] teaching practice, evidence folder, and documentation, [and] sharing ideas with others.

Question Three: To what extent is the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme meeting your expectations?

Online network

At the time of the July workshops and focus groups, PRTs' had made only limited use of the pilot programme's online network. In one focus group, four of the 10 PRTs had signed up to the network, but were yet to engage in discussion online. In another group, the only PRT who had actually logged onto the site said, "There was no one there". Other comments included:

It seems like a good idea, but at the end of a long day it's just another thing to do. We would be doing it out of obligation rather than wanting to. Maybe when registration is over, we will want to do it then.

Not everyone has [received the] link to the online network, but it will be such an exciting thing to get on to. [It would be good to] personalise emails for PRTs; everyone would like access, so [we all] need to be emailed the link and password.

These access issues were addressed after the July workshops. Some PRTs admitted to lacking the technical skills to participate in the online network and suggested an introductory workshop to support them in using the technology. Other PRTs suggested the network provide access to information about curriculum areas, suggested readings, references, and useful links.

Mentor–PRT relationships

The groups of PRTs all expressed enthusiasm for the shared learning that was taking place between mentors and PRTs. PRTs noted that their mentors had gained confidence:

It's good that mentors share their learning from their workshops.

My mentor seems to have more confidence [after the July two-day workshop]; she offers more support and puts more responsibility on me around registration discussions and meetings.

Both mentors and PRTs are learning from each other. It is great there is more support for the mentors. In the past, the mentors have been thrown in the deep end; now they get support and recognition for what they do for PRTs. There's now a mindset of "we're in it together".

In general, PRTs noted that meetings and discussions with their mentors had become more regular and focused:

> Registration was always there, but [the pilot] has brought this more to the forefront. [There is] more discussion [of it now].

> Workshops have exceeded our expectations in terms of focusing discussion between PRT and mentor. We have new ideas from workshops to share with each other. [There has been a] change in the way we talk to each other. [Our] professional dialogue is more focused. Mentors having time to observe is great. Mentors see the value in having time to work on registration stuff during work hours and recognise it is a big thing.

Question Four: How is the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme impacting on your teaching practice?

PRTs commented that the induction and mentoring pilot programme was helping them to make the evidence in their folders "more meaningful":

> When I add things to my folder, it makes me reflect on that piece of evidence and my practice.

> [My] evidence [is becoming] more meaningful, as I have to slow down and reflect.

> Coming from university straight to work, it has been good to keep track of my learning and see the changes to my practice [since] my first learning story.

PRTs also said they were becoming more confident:

> [I am more confident about] approaching and talking to my mentor and our relationship has gone to a new level as we are both more informed about what we are supposed to be doing.

> I feel I can freely discuss, with my mentor, things that have happened in my practice.

Effective teachers for diverse learners

In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become effective teachers for diverse learners" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4), PRTs said that it was useful to discuss learning and teaching with other PRTs from different environments:

> Talking to others and [listening to] their experiences and ideas, your awareness develops and you take this back to the kindergarten.

> [It has been valuable to] share strategies for working with children across cultures.

> [I have enjoyed] supporting other teachers who are working with Pasifika children and hearing that the strategies worked.

PRTs also said that the workshops and the pilot programme as a whole helped them reflect on their practice and apply new learning:

> [The pilot programme has] helped me to look at my beliefs and where they have come from, and [to consider] whether that prejudices me and other people, and how this affects my teaching. [I now ask myself if] there is a better way.

> [The pilot programme has] encouraged open-mindedness. We are open to suggestions; willing to give things a go. We all know where we are with our practice and we look for new ideas from other people. It's been good to get different perspectives.

Professionally engaged teachers

In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4), PRTs spoke about the pilot programme's impact on their learning about and applying the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*:

> [The pilot programme has] empowered me to set goals that are in line with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and to work towards them with my mentor. [It has helped me] put in place good systems. [For example], when I've done a good reading, I write what influence this will have on my practice. These good systems will continue past the registration process, so I will continue to be reflective.

> It's good to ask questions and learn.

> [Considering] why we do things a certain way [is a constant challenge].

PRTs also described how the pilot programme has facilitated the development of professional relationships across ECE centres, communities, regions, and sectors:

> [The pilot helps us become part of a] team working together towards teacher registration. [It is not just a relationship] between two people [any more].

> Coming to these workshops increases your professionalism [by giving you] the opportunity to talk with other professionals.

> It's all part of the relationships and wider community.

Participants at one of the regional PRT focus groups engaged in a vibrant discussion about the enhanced connections with families and communities that they had experienced as a result of the pilot programme. They explained that the pilot programme not only makes the mentors and PRTs more informed about the registration process, but also their childrens' parents and families, and the wider community:

Communicating with childrens' families about attending the workshops makes it more open. It puts a spotlight on registration. Parents will ask how the workshop went. The [school community is more] involved; there is increasing dialogue about the workshops and about registration.

In Dunedin–Southland, the pilot programme's promotion of links with the primary sector had supported PRTs to "think outside the zone" by "visiting a new entrants class rather than another ECE centre".

Question Five: Is there anything else you would like to say about the regional workshops, the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme, or the draft Registered Teacher Criteria?

PRTs from across the regions expressed enthusiasm for the workshops' focused discussions and inspirational speakers. They appreciated that the workshops provided strategies for working with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and encouraged them to set goals and develop team goals.

PRTs commended the overall pilot programme as beneficial for both PRTs and mentors:

It's been really beneficial for the mentors; there's previously been more of a focus on the PRTs.

The increased networking for mentors…and sharing ideas, for example, about how they give feedback to PRTs, [has been valuable for PRTs].

Second-year PRTs from several regions noted the impact of the new programme on mentors:

[Through being in the pilot programme] my mentor has become more committed to meeting and giving advice, and to listening to me instead of diving in with her ideas.

There's a difference [now that] mentors [are] trained. They are now more committed to meeting, give more advice, and [my mentor] waits and allows me to have my say. There's more of a shared understanding.

[My mentor and I are] on the same page now. She makes a point of asking me how it is going; she's checking in more.

PRTs highlighted the benefits of having consistent *Draft Guidelines* for induction and mentoring programmes and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* for registration:

It will be good to get consistent guidelines across the associations. It is great that [induction and mentoring] is going to end up in a more standardised format across the country. Associations' registration booklets vary across the country.

Draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

Overall the PRTs commented very favourably on the clarity of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*:

> I like them. It seems simpler to identify where I am at; they are not so "wordy". I especially [like] the key indicators; they are easier to follow.

> The [criteria in the] new draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* are quite specific. They are a little bit prescriptive (for example, when they say, "Fully registered teachers will…."), but when you're working towards a goal such as registration it is nice to have clear, straightforward criteria. They're clearer than [current] documents from the different associations. There will be fewer areas in our folders.

They were also enthusiastic about having the same clear criteria used across regional kindergarten associations and across ECE services in varied circumstances:

> It will be good to have one document across all sectors. It's good to have something specific to work towards. The new [*Registered Teacher Criteria*] should be great.

Some PRTs had noticed the different numbering used in different drafts of the *Registered Teacher Criteria*, and commented on how they needed to check the wording as well as the numbers. In February, one focus group expressed concern about potential overlap of two of the criteria (Criteria 4 and 10). In July, after further reflection, they followed this up and decided that this overlap was beneficial, not problematic:

> Although Criteria 4 and 10 seemed the same at the start of the year, we now realise, after working with them, that they are different.

> One interesting thing is that we have Criteria 4 and 10 about bicultural partnership. They are quite different, but people thought they were similar at beginning of the year. They overlap, but are different. They are interlinked.

> The overlap of Criteria 4 and 10 is good. It reflects *Te Whāriki* [the ECE curriculum] and how that works with interweaving. It's socio-cultural.

Feedback from participants

This section of the report summarises feedback from the mentors, PRTs, senior teachers, and advisors involved in the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme. The advisory group provided written feedback on the first workshop series; senior teachers solicited feedback from mentors and PRTs after the second workshop series and from PRTs after the third workshop series; and mentors provided written feedback after their national third workshop/hui. Mentors and PRTs also completed a feedback form at the end of the fourth workshop series, commenting on it and the overall pilot programme. They expressed considerable satisfaction with the pilot programme and offered some useful suggestions for further development of induction and mentoring programmes within the sector.

First workshop series: February

At a meeting of the advisory committee that followed the February workshops, advisory group members provided written feedback on the workshops. They also talked about the aspects of the workshops that "surprised and delighted" them:

> There was a strong sense that participants felt they were doing this for themselves, rather than for the association or Council, and that it was their programme. Many viewed the programme as a "serious professional responsibility".

> [It was uplifting to see] PRTs realise that the registration process is about "the excellence of the teaching profession".

> Travelling and staying overnight together, and being with the group for an extended period, built stronger relationships between mentors and PRTs, and across groups.

> [I was delighted to see] PRTs [recognise that] mentors and senior teachers are learners as well.

> [There was a clear] benefit in having a two-day programme as opposed to people working in the evening: people were fresher and better able to contribute. It also gave the programme a status. [It showed] that this is an important activity to be engaged in.

One of the advisory group members also commented:

> As a result of the workshop, we have revamped our induction, appraisal, and registration processes, and our visiting schedule so we can visit mentors and PRTs between workshops.

Senior teachers noted that workshop participants appreciated certain specific aspects of the pilot programme structure, as follows:

- formal welcome; bicultural protocols
- start times to accommodate travellers
- mentors welcoming PRTs and introducing them to the group
- the mix of small- and large-group work, plus presentations
- time to work on skills; practical sessions
- ample time to network; to talk and build relationships
- time to become familiar with the online resources that will support them in the programme.

It was evident from the advisory group's feedback that bringing people together was critical for both PRTs and mentors. In most cases, the February workshop was the first time that mentors had come together as a group. It was also the first time that any of the regions had presented a programme designed specifically for mentors. The advisory group emphasised the importance of trusted relationships and the need to take the time to build those relationships. This would mean including sufficient time in the workshop programme for mentors to talk, share ideas, listen, reflect, discuss, and debate together.

Second workshop series: May

Following the May workshops, senior teachers asked participants for feedback on a number of areas. Using this feedback and their observations, the advisory group identified issues to be developed further in subsequent workshops.

PRTs identified the most valuable aspects of the workshops as being:

- in-depth discussion of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*: "unpacking" and examining meaning
- goal setting: creating reasonable, realistic, and achievable goals
- networking: discussing ideas and sharing resources with peers
- discussion of documentation and evidence: understanding what is needed.

> [I liked] the discussion on evidence. Even though I'm a second-year, I have always wondered what is expected and what [would be considered] "quality". (Nelson PRT)

When the PRTs were asked about what changes they would now make to their practice, PRTs identified setting goals, asking and giving feedback, linking the reflective journal to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, and "deeper and more meaningful reflection".

PRTs requested the following content areas for future workshops:

- gathering and evaluating evidence
- evaluating progress towards goals
- working through examples of reflections and understanding how to write them
- extending specific areas of teaching such as music and science
- talking more about discourse
- time management strategies
- understanding the process for full registration.

Overall, the May workshops were well received by PRTs in each of the regions. They appreciated that the programme was designed to build on their learning from the first workshop and on their teaching experience and experience of mentoring. Participants were engaged and welcomed the opportunity to be with their peers.

Addressing her advisory group peers, independent consultant Ruth Mansell said:

> I was really impressed with what I heard from the PRTs: the depth of their thinking, their understanding of their roles as teachers, and their appreciation for the support they are getting from you and within their ECE centres.

Senior teachers also asked the mentors participating in the May workshops for feedback to assist with future planning. Some mentors commented positively on what they had learnt and how it would influence their practice:

> [I hope] to be more open and available…more accessible to my PRT. Sometimes [I] get caught up in the busyness of the day.

When asked what issues or areas they would like to discuss or receive more information on, mentors identified:

- communication: coaching, giving feedback
- relationships: understanding Generation X and Generation Y, building team cultures, managing conflict respectfully
- documentation: how much is enough
- technology
- mentors' and PRTs' responsibilities.

> Who has what responsibility? How much do I lead the process, how much does the PRT lead? How do you empower the PRT to lead the process if and when appropriate?

Advisory group members also reflected on the workshops. They identified highlights and key issues, including the following:

- Allowing participants time to talk and share ideas, experiences, and resources is important.
- Participants were very engaged with the pilot programme and stayed focused.
- Visiting the online network helped PRTs to feel more confident about using it.
- Working with primary teacher mentors proved valuable.
- PRTs and mentors need clarity around evidence:

> The message given was quality not quantity… [There] seems to be an ongoing stress for PRTs regarding what [constitutes evidence], how much [is required] and so on.

- Taking time to "unpack" the draft *Registered Teachers Criteria* and the *Draft Guidelines* and ask "what does this mean for me and for my teaching practice or mentoring" was crucial.
- Participants at the Dunedin–Southland workshop talked about registration as being a continuation of the teacher education programme: training is five years not three.
- PRTs need assistance on managing tensions between theory and practice:

> Putting theory into practice is a real challenge for some graduates. There is a tension between the socio-cultural theory from college and working in settings based on development theory.

- Forming trusted relationships is key to the success of induction and mentoring.
- Mentors and PRTs need to schedule regular times to meet: meeting needs to be a priority.
- Mentors are keen to develop and extend their skills.

Third workshop series: July

Mentors provided written feedback following the national mentor workshop in July 2009. This showed that mentors rated networking as the single most valuable aspect of this national workshop/hui. It was their first opportunity to network across the regions and services at a national workshop/hui. They also rated the value of discussions highly.

When asked about each session, mentors identified the following topics as the most useful:

- Reflecting on mentoring: the critical mentor; clarification of roles and responsibilities; developing trust; validation of practice.
- Reaching our potential: recognising original ideas have value; understanding and valuing individuals; encouraging people to take risks.
- Giving meaning to the *Draft Guidelines*: working with PRTs; "unpacking" and testing meanings.
- Using the online network for professional conversations: understanding the process and purpose.
- Understanding Generation X and Generation Y: respect and understanding (motivations and attitudes); greater awareness of others in the team; understanding more about ourselves.
- Building effective relationships and having difficult conversations: being aware of our impact on others; building effective relationships; being prepared for conversations; knowing what we are trying to achieve and what we want from others; listening; appreciating people have different perspectives and experiences.
- Gaining full registration: the high-trust model; knowing what the Council expects; accepting that some PRTs may not be ready to be recommended for full registration; documentation should be realistic and evidence readily available (rather than it being "on top of" what PRTs already do).
- Hearing from newly registered teachers: importance of good relationships; effective communication; good planning; feedback.

Following the three regional PRT workshops in July, senior teachers across the regions reported that PRTs identified their key areas of learning from the workshops as:

- understanding reflective practice
- sharing goals and strategies
- discussing documentation
- discussing the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- understanding the potential of the online network
- developing communication skills
- networking.

Fourth workshop series: October

Mentors and PRTs provided written feedback during the fourth and final series of workshops, in October 2009. They completed a feedback form, which asked questions about the October workshop and their experience of the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme as a whole. They were also asked about shifts in their teaching practice.

Overall, feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Mentors described how participating in the ECE pilot programme had changed their mentoring practice, and PRTs described how being a participant had changed their teaching practice. Mentors were asked what advice they would offer to first-time mentors, and PRTs were asked what advice they would give a first-year PRT about undertaking the induction and mentoring programme.

Mentors

October workshop

Across the regions, most mentors said that the final workshop met their expectations. Although the precise content of each regional workshop varied, mentors and PRTs across the regions valued the networking and the focused discussions that took place at the final workshops. Mentors specifically mentioned the following aspects as useful:

- "recapping and tying up loose ends"
- clarifying mentors' roles and responsibilities
- the speakers' presentations
- meeting and networking with other mentors
- discussions with other mentors (centred on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the *Draft Guidelines*).

Mentors made fewer comments about what was not so useful. These included: the timing of the workshop and spending time away from the ECE centre at a busy time, discussions about the wording of the *Draft Guidelines*, and distance travelled (in Dunedin–Southland).

Pilot programme

Almost all of the mentors (95%) said that the pilot programme had met their expectations fully. Two of the 37 respondents said that their expectations had been met only "in part".

For mentors, the most useful and successful aspects of the pilot programme were:

- mutual support and networking with other mentors
- giving and receiving feedback; developing listening skills
- the two-day national workshop/hui with mentors
- focusing on the importance of relationships
- gaining mentoring skills; understanding the mentor role
- "unpacking" the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

Mentors' statements about the aspects of the pilot programme they found successful included the following:

> Sharing ideas and clarifying expectations [was useful], as was looking at different perspectives and gaining tools for having difficult conversations. The hui [the national workshop for mentors] was great for networking and gave us different presenters and new ideas, tools, and tips.

> The hui in Wellington provided a wealth of information and some very good tools for working not only with my PRT but with others in the teaching team.

> All the workshops were useful. The hui in Wellington covered a broad range of topics that I found interesting and provoked me to think of wider issues.

> Professional development opportunities around the mentor teacher role and developing interpersonal skills for mentoring [were useful].

> [I enjoyed] the variety of different skill-based sessions, giving and receiving feedback, goal setting, networking, and discussing what it means to be a mentor.

> Hearing how PRTs feel about the process [was valuable and I enjoyed] the great speakers.

The least useful aspects for mentors were: the distances travelled, timing of the workshops and "early starts", "one late meeting", "sometimes a double-up of information", and no "feedback and lack of participation on Wordpress" (the interim online network).

When mentors were asked for other general comments about the ECE pilot programme, their responses affirmed the importance of networking, relationships, and insight into the *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. Many mentors were very positive: the pilot programme was "fantastic" and "well worth doing":

> It was great to network with other PRT mentors and especially valuable for first-time mentors. I would have liked more time to fill in this form and reflect on the year's journey by looking at all my notes again.

> I have found the professional development this year very valuable, especially in relation to having difficult discussions, being confident about what I know, and giving feedback and "feedforward".

> It is great to have insight into the new draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. It was a shame that the online network wasn't well used for discussions, but the hui in Wellington was invaluable. The focus groups gave me more understanding of the implications for the future of the programme.

> It has been a worthwhile project and a similar model should be available to all mentors.

This has been a wonderful, robust programme from which I have gained much both personally and professionally. I hope that this can be afforded to others in the future.

I feel this pilot programme has made me reflect on my own practices. I have become more confident about taking a PRT through to registration. I have a clear direction with the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

It has been great for my learning as a mentor and also for my other leadership roles within my kindergarten. This has been a very valuable professional experience. It is probably the best professional development I have been involved in, because it was so easy to follow. I felt confident and knew I was always being reinforced with more meetings to come.

This has been an invaluable process for demystifying what has the potential to be an enriching process for both parties. It has been exciting to be on the journey.

At the start, teacher registration always felt it was about the PRT and now I understand that it is a journey for both parties and learning for both.

Changes made to mentoring or teaching practice

When the responses were collated across the three regions, it was apparent that mentors believed:

- they were more confident in their role
- their relationships with PRTs had become centrally important
- they were giving PRTs more written feedback
- they had developed more skills as educative mentors.

Mentors' responses about their confidence in the role included:

It has made me more aware of my responsibility and [more aware that I must] make regular time available to give feedback and be more specific in my observations. It has made me more self-reflective of my own practice.

I have become more confident in expressing the knowledge I do have and being able to articulate it. Also I haven't shied away from courageous conversations. I have grown in these ways as a leader.

[I have] more confidence in giving feedback and a better understanding of how PRTs feel. [I know I am] part of a much larger group.

Because I feel more empowered and confident, [mentoring] has become a more positive and enjoyable task. I have also found that two-way feedback is important with my team [not just within the mentor–PRT relationship].

Mentors commented on how they were applying their newly developed skills to their practice:

> I now have a strong foundation and a new base of skills and knowledge from which to work with PRTs. Each journey will continue to strengthen this foundation. [I have also gained] communication skills and an understanding [of different] personalities. [The pilot programme] has given me the opportunity to grow personally and professionally.

> I have become more reflective. Hopefully [I] have refined and enhanced my communication skills. I believe I have challenged some of my prior beliefs and thoughts as a mentor and leader.

> I would use a more planned approach to mentoring, with more emphasis on a critical culture and developing the relationship as a foundation. [I understand] the importance of a critical culture and the ability to have reflective and at times courageous conversations.

> [I am] more reflective of my own teaching [and have] strategies for feedback [and] challenging PRTs [and am] more…focused.

Mentors also reported they had built learning relationships with their PRTs as a result of participating in the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme:

> [I have] built a closer relationship with my PRT. [We are] able to have in-depth and reflective discussions [and are] developing ways to provide written feedback. We have a shared understanding and clear direction. [It is important to] make mentoring a focus and keep it in the limelight.

> [The pilot gave me an] opportunity to think about the formal side of the relationship, highlighting the pivotal nature of building relationships to allow learning conversations to occur. [We have] created a culture of reflection and critical dialogue.

Advice for first-time mentors

Mentors were asked what advice they would give to a first-time mentor. The responses emphasised relationships and understanding the role of an educative mentor, and the importance of networking and professional development:

> Build a relationship and understand the PRT's learning style. Set firm guidelines in a contract around expectations and norms. Unpack what the criteria [in the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*] mean.

> Take time to get to know your PRT. Schedule meetings. Be specific about what the role of the PRT is in driving this, so that they take responsibility around what they will do between meetings and what they want the mentor to observe.

> Develop a positive relationship and take into account the wider background dispositions and style of learning. Be patient, encourage your PRT and give praise. Reflect in a variety of ways.

Know that, while mentoring is a big time commitment, it will enhance kindergarten operation since confident PRTs [will contribute to] the quality of the kindergarten programmes. Build the relationship [with the PRT] and develop a contract.

Have a good understanding of the role so feedback practices can be established early. Read the *Draft Guidelines* for mentors and reflect on what they will mean in practice.

Build a solid foundation based on trust and create a climate of professional debate and dialogue.

Go on a course about mentoring.

PRTs

October workshop

Almost all PRTs from all regions found that the final workshop met their expectations. PRTs' comments across the regions showed that they considered the following aspects of the workshop most useful:

- having Council expectations for registration explained
- receiving practical advice about gathering evidence related to specific criteria in the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- networking with other PRTs from their own and other regions.

In response to a question about what they experienced as less useful, several PRTs commented that they would have preferred having a session from the Council about expectations for registration right at the beginning of the pilot programme. It was also mentioned that the online network was "not working" for PRTs.

Pilot programme

The majority of the PRTs (88%) said that the pilot programme had met their expectations fully. Four of the 33 respondents said that their expectations had been met only "in part", but one indicated that this was because not all the PRTs had attended the October workshop, while another said this was because they had just joined the pilot programme and therefore could not comment on the whole pilot programme.

For the PRTs, the most useful and successful aspects of the pilot were the following:

- the support networks that have evolved
- meeting colleagues for discussion and feedback
- "unpacking" the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*
- gaining an understanding of the registration process
- support for mentors and enhanced relationships with mentors:

I have a better relationship with my mentor as a result of both of us being more aware of the process.

Less successful aspects were that some PRTs found the days very long, with the additional travelling time. Two PRTs also identified the online network as a less successful aspect.

Other general comments from the PRTs about the ECE pilot programme included the value of having mentors and including them in the same programme, the usefulness of discussing registration, and the importance of networking:

I think the inclusion of mentors as well as PRTs is really important; as is the workshop for mentor training. The venues, speakers, and organisers have done a great job.

I have found the whole programme to be informative, empowering, and inspirational.

[I like the] focus on reflective practice. It is so much better [than past models] as the focus is on our own practice and responsibility.

It is great to meet people from other associations and see how they do things.

It's been great to be part of this extended learning community. The workshops in communication and relationships were extremely valuable and have had a huge impact on my teaching practice.

[I hope] the support networks are continued and become part of the NZK registration process.

Enhanced understanding

Many PRTs felt that being a participant in the ECE pilot programme had changed their teaching practice by making them more reflective, confident, objective, and open-minded. Overall, PRTs stated that the induction and mentoring pilot programme had contributed to enhanced relationships with their mentors, which in turn had a positive influence on their teaching:

[Participating in the pilot has] given me a clearer picture and built my relationship with my mentor. [There is now] more focus and professionalism towards teachers' registration in the kindergarten.

[I have engaged in] empowered discussions with my mentor, [have a] broader view of what is evidence, [and developed as] a reflective, ongoing learner.

[I am] getting things done on time without delay. I work on non-contact time to update all my learning stories. I am gaining more understanding through sharing with others.

[I have a] better relationship with my mentor and a stronger awareness that being a PRT does not mean my opinions are any less valid than those of a fully registered teacher. [I have a] better understanding of the feedback process.

Advice for first-year PRTs

PRTs were also asked what advice they would give to a first-year PRT. They said that it was important to be open-minded, to see registration as part of their day-to-day teaching practice and not get inundated with the work, and to do small amounts of evidence gathering on a regular basis:

> It is worth being part of the induction programme.

> Use the new draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*! [If you get the chance] attend kindergarten association workshops.

> Go into meetings with an open mind. Be willing to reflect and take risks and try new things.

> Don't stress over what you need to put in your folder. Ask your mentor for feedback and advice when you can. Be honest about where you are at in your learning and your teaching practices and what you want to work on.

> Be open-minded; embrace and enjoy the journey.

4. Discussion

This chapter discusses key findings from the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme and their implications and presents insights from the advisory group. It ends with recommendations to promote effective induction and mentoring programmes in the ECE sector.

Key findings

Usefulness of the workshops

The findings strongly suggest that the workshops developed for the mentors and PRTs were very useful. Both the mentors and the PRTs were enthusiastic about the workshops and their expectations were exceeded. This was evident in the data from the focus groups and from the feedback that mentors and PRTs provided at the workshops.

Building relationships and making time to talk emerged as two critical elements of effective induction and mentoring programmes. Open and honest communication, respecting the views of others, taking risks, and setting clear expectations are all key elements of a trust-based relationship. Goal setting, "courageous conversations", seeking and giving feedback, creativity, generational differences, and mentoring models were among the topics explored at the workshops.

For mentors in particular, focusing on these aspects was important. While many mentors felt they had skills in these areas, it became evident as the pilot progressed that they needed to enhance them.

In their feedback and focus group interviews, PRTs stated that they appreciate and learn from being in a programme where they:

- are a valued and respected member of the teaching team
- work collaboratively with the mentor and other teachers and receive help and support when it is needed through a collegial rather than hierarchical model that recognises that both mentors and PRTs are learners
- are clear about what is expected of them (in terms of evidence and documentation)
- have the time and resources to confidently participate in the programme.

PRTs indentified several changes in their practice as a result of the pilot. These included enhanced reflection on teaching practice, applying new learning, effective questioning and feedback, and more meaningful documentation. For mentors, the major shifts included examining their own practice and engaging in genuine professional dialogue on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, developing strategies to provide more effective mentoring, and working with empowered and more confident PRTs.

At the initial focus groups in February, mentors across the regions stated that they expected the workshops would enhance their mentoring practice because:

- their role would be clearer and their goal setting would be more effective
- their use of resources and documentation would be better informed
- they would be empowered and stimulated to engage in more professional discussion
- they would have more shared understanding with the PRTs and be able to work collaboratively with them.

The results show that mentors' specific expectations were met. This is evident in the mentors' comments at the second round of focus groups in July and in their feedback at the conclusion of the pilot programme. Mentors from all three focus groups found that attendance at the workshops had a considerable influence on their mentoring practice. The research results show that this was happening in several ways, for example by providing role clarity and affirmation for mentors, and by demonstrating strategies for responding to PRTs as diverse learners. Comments from the focus groups included:

> [The workshops] helped us understand our mentor role better. They helped the mentors and PRTs formalise that part of our relationship and we now have a clearer idea of our roles and clear expectations.

> [The workshops have] opened up professional discussions on the whole of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. It has probably put the whole process on a more reciprocal relationship; mentor and PRT learn from each other.

Similarly, the PRTs' expectations of the workshops and the pilot programme as a whole were met. All groups of PRTs expressed enthusiasm about the shared learning that took place throughout the pilot programme, both between mentors and PRTs and within the wider PRT group. PRTs explained that the workshops were useful for networking with other PRTs from different environments and for engaging in discussions focused on learning and teaching. Specific comments included:

> Talking to others and [listening to] their experiences and ideas, your awareness develops and you take this back to your kindergarten.

> [It has been valuable to] share strategies for working with children across cultures.

> [I have enjoyed] supporting other teachers who are working with Pasifika children and hearing that the strategies worked.

In focus groups and workshops, PRTs also highlighted the benefit of more regular and focused meetings with mentors:

> [Following the workshops, there has been a] change in the way [my mentor and I] talk to each other. [Our] professional dialogue is more focused.

The *Draft Guidelines* and draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

The focus groups and the workshops included discussions of mentors' and PRTs' experiences with the *Draft Guidelines* and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*.

As described in Chapter 3 of this report (Results), mentors commented that the *Draft Guidelines* provide a potentially useful focus when PRTs work with mentors. Mentors also spoke about the usefulness of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* for PRTs working towards registration. In considering the *Draft Guidelines* vision statement that PRTs will "become professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4), one mentor said:

> [The *Draft Guidelines*] helps them focus and sets them up for reflection. It's all about reflection…the system gives them the opportunity to talk about it rather than stew about it…

Mentors also commented on how the PRTs in the pilot programme had become more "effective teachers for diverse learners" (New Zealand Teachers Council, 2009, p. 4):

> As mentors, it's up to us to ask challenging questions about effectiveness and diverse learners…questions such as: "What is an effective teacher for diverse learners?" "Do the PRTs know [what these] words [mean]?" It creates discussion with PRTs…

> [The *Draft Guidelines*] encourage teachers who have newly graduated to keep learning and keep reflecting on their practice. The *Draft Guidelines*, draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, and the registration process help shape their expectations…

> The PRTs are taking more notice of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*…by using the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*, the *Draft Guidelines* are being covered.

In addition, mentors from all groups described the *Draft Guidelines* as useful in providing role clarity:

> [We have used the *Draft Guidelines*] as a reference…as a job description. In the past, [knowing what to do] as a mentor was a "stab in the dark".

More specifically, mentors expressed enthusiasm about the usefulness of the *Draft Guidelines* section 6.2 and found this section on the role of the mentor particularly helpful to guide their day-to-day mentoring practice. Mentors from several groups also commented favourably on the *Draft Guidelines'* focus on quality teaching and learning.

When asked if they would recommend any changes to the *Draft Guidelines*, mentors made positive comments about the document's content and layout. The vision statements were seen as being important to focus on and the bullet points promoted clarity, for example. Mentors at the focus groups and workshops made suggestions for changes to the Draft Guidelines. These were: include more emphasis on shared learning and co-construction, limit the use of jargon, and provide the *Draft Guidelines* in both te reo Māori and English.

Overall the PRTs commented very favourably on the clarity of the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. They were also enthusiastic about having the same clear criteria used across regional kindergarten associations and across ECE services in varied circumstances:

> It will be good to have one document across all sectors. It's good to have something specific to work towards. The new [*Registered Teacher Criteria*] should be great.

The research findings indicate that providing the time and opportunity for mentors and PRTs to talk about what is expected of them, thereby giving meaning to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and the *Draft Guidelines*, is important in an ECE sector induction and mentoring pilot programme. Time spent in networks discussing, debating, exploring, and testing specific criteria and guidelines from these two documents provided clarity and shared understanding.

Implications

This ECE pilot programme addressed the following key research question:

- How does the ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme make a difference to the mentors' and PRTs' learning and teaching?

Chapter 1 of this report (Introduction) described in some detail how the workshop programmes and collaborative processes were developed and implemented with reference to the *Draft Guidelines* and the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*. In this way, the Introduction itself sets out an example of a collaborative model of teacher induction and mentoring that was appraised as appropriate by mentors and teachers in the ECE sector. Chapter 3 (Results) presented and synthesised data that demonstrate the ways in which the series of workshops and continuing interactions fostered supportive educative relationships and shared understanding among mentors and PRTs and led to changes in their professional practice.

Overall, the establishment of an online network for mentors and PRTs was a less successful initiative. Comments from the focus group participants, feedback from across the regions, the workshop observations, and participants' involvement in the online network all support this conclusion. On a positive note, strategies were developed during the pilot to increase use of the online network. It should be noted that the online network continues to exist and is available for future development.

Insights from the advisory group

At several points in the course of the ECE pilot programme, the advisory group scrutinised the focus group research findings, the observational records, and feedback from the regions. This process was consistent with Gordon Wells' (2001, 2002) notion of a community of inquiry, jointly questioning and reflecting on the meaning of the data. Later in the programme, during the process of reflecting on the preliminary research findings, the advisory group worked collectively to identify those attributes of the pilot programme that constitute success factors for induction and mentoring in ECE contexts. These attributes included:

- The pilot, developed in synchrony with early childhood values, was consistent with the principles of *Te Whāriki* and included socio-cultural approaches and team collaboration.
- The ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme was developed "by teachers, for teachers" and this contributed to increasing confidence among the participants.
- The pilot was fully supported by kindergarten employers and implemented across associations and geographical regions.
- A nationally designed approach to regional workshops overseen by a central advisory group contributed to a consistent and sustainable process of induction and mentoring.
- The process emphasised the value of networking and taking time to "unpack" the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines* and the importance of shared understandings.
- The pilot programme included "exemplary" planned professional development for PRTs, "hooking teachers early in their careers" and influencing wider teaching teams. It "tapped into an energy for more".
- Collaboration was a major strength of the formalised and focused professional development opportunities offered to mentors and PRTs.
- The pilot programme as a whole and the workshops specifically delivered consistent quality amidst regional diversity.
- Participants focused on benefits for children through enhanced teaching and learning.

As intended, this pilot programme facilitated greater consistency of induction programmes and assessment for registration for PRTs across the different regional associations, while being adaptable to the circumstances of different sectors and individual teachers.

Sustainability and transferability

The model developed for and through the ECE pilot programme relied on bringing people together to share ideas, debate and discuss issues, learn from and support each other, and more broadly to build a professional learning community both for mentors and PRTs. The collaborative model is transferable and the content of the workshops is relevant to mentors and PRTs across the education sector. The ECE pilot experience indicates that the expectations mentors and PRTs have about the

process and their roles are the same across services. This is evident in the feedback from participants in focus groups who reflected on the questions from a teacher's perspective, rather than from a service perspective, and focused on teaching practice. It is likely that this would also be true for mentors and PRTs in schools.

Teachers' participation in professional development within their ECE centre or school, or regional network, is well established and reflected in the ECE pilot model. The model requires a plan for professional development that focuses on supporting mentors and PRTs over a sustained period of time. This may require ECE services, and in particular early childhood education and care centres, to commit to sustained professional development rather than to "one off" opportunities, as is likely to be the case at present. Feedback from the participants from kindergartens and ECE centres strongly supports the importance of building trusted relationships and of mentors and PRTs making the time to talk together to understand and give meaning to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines*. These features are relevant to all teachers regardless of the age of the students they teach.

The sustainability of the pilot programme, particularly for teachers in education and care services, will rely on managers and committees being better informed about teacher registration, on funding to support participation, and on appropriate professional development programmes and opportunities being available. The removal of the target for 100% qualified and registered teachers in teacher-led services by 2012 and recent cuts to the Ministry of Education professional development budget have the potential to undermine effective induction and mentoring programmes. ECE centres may not be able to afford to support teachers to undertake a comprehensive professional development programme.

The sustainability of the pilot programme for kindergarten teachers is assured. NZK associations are committed to employing 100% qualified and registered teachers and will look for ways to realise that commitment. The research from the ECE pilot programme presents rich information for senior teachers to include in revised induction programmes and to reflect in professional development for kindergarten leaders and mentors. It highlights the key elements of successful induction and mentoring programmes, which can be built into associations' programmes that both reflect local characteristics and are nationally consistent.

For ECE, barriers to participating in the pilot programme did not relate to differences in teaching and learning between services: the model was sufficiently robust to be relevant to teachers in any setting. The barriers were issues such as the appropriate use of available funds to support participation in an induction programme. While these issues have an impact on programmes, they fell outside the brief of the pilot. Nonetheless, these issues are identified in the following section as they will be critical to address if effective professional development for mentors and PRTs is to be a reality across the sector.

Emerging issues

From its experiences guiding the pilot programme, the advisory group identified a number of issues with the potential to create barriers to effective induction and mentoring in ECE settings. The committee recommends the Council consider these issues and develop strategies to address them.

Relationships

- PRTs, particularly in early childhood education and care centres, need to be able to ask employers for support when there is no induction programme in place.
- Mentors need to adapt their approaches to different PRTs: recent graduates that have worked in the sector for a number of years; PRTs that have come from other services; and PRTs new to the sector.
- Mentors should take particular care when mentoring older PRTs who have had considerable experience working in an ECE centre prior to gaining their registration.
- PRTs need particular support to manage the tension between socio-cultural theory from teacher education programmes and the development theory on which many ECE centres are based.
- Mentor networks and PRT networks should be established and maintained as these are important ways to share ideas and resources, identify issues, and gain support.

The draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*

- The draft *Registered Teachers Criteria* need to be more widely available: some PRTs have never seen the document and many ECE centres do not have access to it.
- There needs to be clarity around the transition from the old *Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions* to the new draft *Registered Teachers Criteria.*
- There needs to be clarity about the purpose of the draft *Registered Teachers Criteria* and how it works in teacher appraisal alongside the professional standards in teachers' employment agreements. It is particularly important that senior teachers and others in the kindergarten or ECE centre involved in recommending PRTs for full registration agree on what the draft *Registered Teachers Criteria* requires.

Mentors

- Mentors need support to manage the pressures of working with more than one PRT in a centre. Consideration could be given to determining an optimum number of PRTs per mentor.
- The expectations of leadership could be refined. In kindergartens and ECE centres, the mentor is generally the head teacher or supervisor. They take on the induction programme as an extra responsibility; they do not always choose to be in the mentoring role.
- Finding ways to recognise and support mentors to manage the additional responsibility and the expectations of the role should be part of the employer's induction or registration policy.

- Pressures, such as a kindergarten reorganisation that results in larger, more complex teams, increase demands on mentors and PRTs.

Process

- There must be clarity around expectations of the mentor and PRT. This clarity is central to the success of induction and mentoring programmes.
- PRTs need to be aware that reaching full registration may take longer than two years and that the mentor will not recommend it if the PRT has not completed the induction programme to the mentor's satisfaction.
- Mentors need to have the confidence to make a recommendation for full registration, or not, and to be supported in that decision.
- Mentors and PRTs need to find time to meet on a regular basis. This is a challenge in ECE settings, where staff may not have the same non-contact times or work full days, and the staff hour count policy affects an ECE centre's funding if registered teachers are absent from the centre for more than 40 hours.
- Priority should be given to working through and giving meaning to the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines* and to discussing what the different requirements look like in practice.

Teacher education

- Teacher education providers could give graduates information about registration. At present, the information provided to graduates is variable, often insufficient, and in some cases, entirely lacking.
- Registration should be promoted as part of a continuing teacher education journey.
- Graduates should know and understand what is expected of them to reach full registration.

Online resources

- PRTs may need access to the internet. Some do not have access to the internet at home and their ECE centre may have only one personal computer, which is used for administration work. It is difficult for these PRTs to spend the required time sourcing and reviewing information online.
- Mentors and PRTs should be encouraged to use information technology to help build a technology-savvy culture in kindergartens and ECE centres.
- Mentors and PRTs need time to participate, technical confidence, and clarity about the purpose of the online network if they are to use online resources effectively.
- As part of mentoring professional development or the induction programme, mentors and PRTs need time and support to build their confidence using online technology as a teaching tool and a means for ongoing professional dialogue.
- An online learning community must provide security and confidentiality of the online discussion.

- There should be clarity about whether the online network is for professional discussion and debate or a place to share resources including readings, or both.

Funding

- Consideration should be given to the difficulty ECE centres face in accessing release time for mentors and PRTs when ECE funding is attached to the number of ratioed and registered teachers in the centre at all times (the staff hour count policy). Mentors and PRTs often use their own time to participate in induction and mentoring programmes because of funding pressures and a lack of relievers.
- Accountability and guidance is needed for the use of Ministry of Education funding to support PRTs. Some ECE centres have received funding and put no or only limited support in place. Some give the funding to the PRT to use at their discretion, but without support as to what is appropriate. Some ECE centres regard the funding as belonging to the centre, making it difficult for the PRT to access. In some cases, a PRT has moved to a new ECE centre but the original centre retained the funding and the new centre cannot claim funding to complete or start the induction and mentoring programme.
- Consideration should be given to funding teachers "subject to confirmation". At present, these teachers do not attract funding support but, in many cases, they need a similar induction programme to the PRT. This situation is likely to become more prevalent as more teachers return to the service as a result of the recession and teacher supply issues.
- Consideration should be given to funding future professional development to support induction and mentoring programmes, given the funding cuts announced in the government's 2009 budget.
- The implications of the abandonment, by the Ministry of Education, of the target for 100% qualified and registered teachers in teacher-led ECE services must be considered. This major policy shift, announced at the end of the pilot programme, will significantly impact ongoing support for professional development and induction and mentoring programmes.

Recommendations

Drawing on the research findings and informal feedback from mentors and PRTs, the advisory group made the following recommendations to support effective induction and mentoring programmes in the ECE sector.

Resource development

- That mentor and PRT development programmes focus on the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria* and *Draft Guidelines,* identifying teaching strategies against each.
- That the Council clearly set out its expectations, both for content and process, and particularly for the level of documentation required.

- That the level and use of funding available to services to support the registration process is clarified.
- That the relationship between the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria,* the industrial professional standards, and teacher appraisal is clarified.
- That guidelines on entitlements and expectations (for mentors, PRTs, employers, and other teaching staff) are produced.
- That a package for employers be produced and sent to them when a PRT applies for registration.

Information distribution

- That more information on induction and mentoring be available via the internet.
- That these online resources are available for teacher education providers to pass to their students in their final year of study.
- That "Introduction to the profession" days be held for graduates during the post-exam time.
- That opportunities be identified to present the ECE pilot research findings and initiate discussion on induction and mentoring.
- That an annual PRTs' conference for teachers across the early childhood education sector be held nationally or regionally.
- That a meeting be held with teacher education providers to present the findings of the ECE pilot, highlighting the connections pre- and post-graduation and expectations of PRTs.

Policy areas

- That there be accountability for funding and monitoring of expenditure tagged to supporting PRTs to become fully registered.
- That the possibility of excluding teachers undertaking registration related activities from the "staff hour count" policy requirements be explored.
- That mentors and PRTs be provided opportunities to undertake professional development.
- That the possibility that staff other than those employed as a registered teacher can maintain registration and therefore be available to be a mentor be explored.

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Abbreviations and glossary

Abbreviations

ECE   early childhood education

NZCA   Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa/New Zealand Childcare Association

NZK   New Zealand Kindergartens Inc. Te Putahi Kura Puhou o Aotearoa

PRT   Provisionally Registered Teacher

Glossary

Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand (Draft Guidelines)	Draft guidelines developed by the New Zealand Teachers Council for schools and early childhood education settings in Aotearoa New Zealand to guide the development and implementation of induction and mentoring programmes. The final version was published in 2011 as *Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring and Mentor Teachers*.
ECE induction and mentoring pilot programme	The early childhood education sector induction and mentoring pilot programme, developed by New Zealand Kindergartens Inc. Te Putahi Kura Puhou o Aotearoa as one of four sector-specific pilots within the New Zealand Teachers Council's Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme.
Educative mentoring	Educative mentoring requires a vision of good teaching, a regard for Provisionally Registered Teachers as learners, and consideration of how to develop a principled, evidenced-based approach to teaching in order to improve student's learning.
Induction	The broad term for all support and guidance (including mentoring) provided to newly graduated teachers as they begin their teaching practice in real situations.

Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme	A New Zealand Teachers Council national project trialling the *Draft Guidelines*. The project involved four sector-specific pilots and an external evaluation and investigated models of induction and mentor teacher development.
Limited mentoring	A narrow view of mentoring which has the primary purpose of easing a Provisionally Registered Teacher's entry into the profession with mentors providing "on-the-job support" to identify and fix deficits in the new teacher's practice and help with questions and uncertainties that arise.
Mentor teacher	A registered teacher employed by a school or early childhood education service to mentor the Provisionally Registered Teacher through the provision of advice, guidance, and professional development opportunities. (May also be called a tutor teacher.)
New Zealand Teachers Council (the Council)	The professional and regulatory body for registered teachers working in English and Māori medium settings in early childhood education, schools, and other related education institutions in Aotearoa New Zealand. (http://www.teacherscouncil.govt.nz)
Pedagogical expertise	Pedagogical expertise in the context of this report is defined as having an over-riding concern with students' learning and being constantly alert to developing a repertoire of pedagogical strategies to address this concern.
Provisionally Registered Teacher (PRT)	A graduate from an approved initial teacher education programme, who has New Zealand Teachers Council provisional registration. (May also be called a beginning teacher.)
Registered Teacher Criteria	Developed by the New Zealand Teachers Council, it describes the criteria for quality teaching in Aotearoa New Zealand, detailing what Provisionally Registered Teachers need to show to gain full registration and what experienced teachers need to demonstrate to maintain a practising certificate. The *Registered Teacher Criteria* was piloted in 2009 and published in 2010.

Satisfactory Teacher Dimensions	Developed by the Teacher Registration Board and first published in 1996, the dimensions have now been superseded by the *Registered Teacher Criteria*. The dimensions described the criteria to be met by all fully registered teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand.
Te Whāriki	Developed by the New Zealand Ministry of Education, *Te Whāriki* is the curriculum framework for the early childhood education sector. It covers the education and care of children from birth to school age and is used by most early childhood education services in Aotearoa New Zealand to guide students' learning opportunities.

Appendix A: Information letter, information sheets, and consent forms

Induction and mentoring pilot programme

New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated
Research February-December 2009

Letter of information for
Mentors, PRTs, and all participants in the regional workshops

Kia ora. We welcome you warmly to this regional workshop, held as part of the New Zealand Kindergartens' *Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme*. We are all delighted that NZ Kindergartens' proposal to pilot and research the induction and mentoring programme was successful. This research and development project is funded by the New Zealand Teachers Council.

The key research question is: *How does the induction and mentoring programme, implemented by New Zealand Kindergartens, make a difference to the mentors' and provisionally registered teachers' (PRTs'/mentees') learning and teaching?*

The NZ Teachers Council *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand* are an integral part of the induction and mentoring pilot programme and the research.

The researcher invited to work alongside the mentoring pilot programme is Dr Val Podmore. During the regional workshops in February and July 2009, Val Podmore has agreed to be present, to meet mentors and mentees/PRTs, and to observe and take notes. No identifying features, judgements, or personal comments about individual participants (mentors and mentees) will be recorded. The purpose of Val's presence as an observer at the workshops is to write notes that are concerned mainly with the utility of the Teachers Council guidelines and criteria and that report on overall themes and issues emerging from the discussion. If at any stage during the workshop you would prefer not to have a comment noted, please state this and Val will stop writing at that point (and until permitted to continue note taking).

This research has been assessed and approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa NZCA. A final report will be prepared for the NZ Teachers Council. Findings may also be disseminated in a variety of forums after the report is made public. If you have any queries or would like any further information about the project, you are welcome to contact Clare Wells (Tel.____) at NZ Kindergartens Inc. (Wellington) or Val Podmore (Tel.____).

Kind regards,

Clare Wells and Val Podmore

Note: The Kindergarten Senior Teachers from your region will also be inviting mentors' (or head teachers', centre managers'/supervisors') and PRTs' (mentees') to participate in separate focus group interviews of mentors and mentees. If you are approached about the opportunity to participate in a focus group interview, your informed, written consent will be sought. These focus group Interviews will be facilitated by Val Podmore and held as part of, and at the same location as, the February and July regional workshops.

Induction and mentoring pilot programme

New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated
Research February-December 2009

Information Sheet For Mentors
& Head Teachers, Centre Managers/Supervisors

Kia ora. We are all delighted that NZ Kindergartens' proposal to pilot and research the induction and mentoring programme was successful. The researcher invited to work alongside the mentoring pilot programme and to facilitate the focus group interviews is Dr Val Podmore. The research is funded by the New Zealand Teachers Council. We are warmly inviting you to participate in this research. This research has been assessed and approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa NZCA. The key research question is:

How does the induction and mentoring programme, implemented by New Zealand Kindergartens, make a difference to the mentors' and provisionally registered teachers' (PRTs'/mentees') learning and teaching?

The NZ Teachers Council *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand* are an integral part of the induction and mentoring pilot programme and the research.

We are seeking mentors' (or head teachers', centre managers'/supervisors') and PRTs' (mentees') written consent to participate. We request permission to include you in focus group interviews of mentors. (Later in the year you will also be invited to complete feedback forms on the mentoring pilot; your name and identifying features will not be on these forms).

If you agree to participate, focus group interviews will be held as part of, and at the same location as, the regional workshops for mentors. At the beginning of the focus group interviews, ground rules will be discussed, and you will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. The duration of each focus group will be around one and a half hours. Notes will be taken during the focus groups. Your name will not be recorded on the focus group interview notes. You will be offered the opportunity to see and amend sections of the focus group records during the focus group meeting, and to check the focus group interview notes. We will respect confidentiality. Interview notes and confidential material will be stored in a locked cabinet at the home office of the researcher/s and destroyed (by shredding) within 2 years of completion of the project.

You will have the right not to answer any question during the focus groups; and to withdraw from further participation before the second focus group in July 2009. A final report will be prepared for the NZ Teachers Council. Findings may also be disseminated in a variety of forums after the report is made public.

If you have any queries or would like any further information about the project, you are welcome to contact Clare Wells (Tel.___) at NZ Kindergartens Inc. (Wellington) or Val Podmore (Tel.._____).

Kind regards,

Clare Wells and Val Podmore

Induction and mentoring pilot programme

New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated
Research February-December 2009

Consent Form

For Mentors, Head Teachers, Centre Managers/Supervisors

I have been given and understood an explanation of this research project. I understand that I am invited to take part in the focus group interviews, one at each of two of the regional workshops (in February and July). The focus groups will be of around one-and-a-half hours' duration.

(*Please circle that which applies)*

I agree to participate in

focus group interview/s about the project,

and to having my comments recorded at the group/s   YES   NO

My consent to participate means that:

My name will not be on my comments made at the focus group interviews

I have the right not to answer any question during the focus group interviews;

I will be offered the opportunity to see and amend sections of

the focus group records during the focus group meeting, and to

check the notes.

I can say no to further participation in the research before the

second focus group in July 2009.

Mentor's/Head teacher's/Centre manager/centre supervisor's FULL NAME:

First name _____ Family name _____

(please print)

Signature_____   Date_____

Induction and mentoring pilot programme

New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated
Research February-December 2009

Information Sheet For

Provisionally Registered Teachers (Mentees)

Kia ora. We are all delighted that NZ Kindergartens' proposal to pilot and research the induction and mentoring programme was successful. The researcher invited to work alongside the mentoring pilot programme and to facilitate the focus group interviews is Dr Val Podmore. The research is funded by the New Zealand Teachers Council. We are warmly inviting you to participate in this research. This research has been assessed and approved by the Research and Ethics Committee of Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa NZCA. The key research question is:

How does the induction and mentoring programme, implemented by New Zealand Kindergartens, make a difference to the mentors' and provisionally registered teachers' (PRTs'/mentees') learning and teaching?

The NZ Teachers Council *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand* are an integral part of the induction and mentoring pilot programme and the research.

We are seeking PRTs' (mentees') written consent to participate in focus group interviews. (Later in the year you will also be invited to complete feedback forms on the mentoring pilot; your name and identifying features will not be on these forms).

If you agree to participate, focus group interviews will be held as part of, and at the same location as, the regional workshops for PTEs. At the beginning of the focus group interviews, ground rules will be discussed, and you will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement. The duration of each focus group will be around one and a half hours. Notes will be taken during the interviews. Your name will not be recorded on the focus group interview notes. You will be offered the opportunity to see and amend sections of the focus group records during the focus group meeting, and to check the focus group interview notes. We will respect confidentiality. Interview notes and confidential material will be stored in a locked cabinet at the home office of the researcher/s and destroyed (by shredding) within 2 years of completion of the project.

You will have the right not to answer any question during the focus groups; and to withdraw from further participation before the second focus group in July 2009. A final report will be prepared for the NZ Teachers Council. Findings may also be disseminated in a variety of forums after the report is made public.

If you have any queries or would like any further information about the project, you are welcome to contact Clare Wells (Tel.__) at NZ Kindergartens Inc. or Val Podmore (Tel. __).

Kind regards

Clare Wells and Val Podmore

Induction and mentoring pilot programme

New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated
Research February-December 2009

Consent Form
For Provisionally Registered Teachers (Mentees)

I have been given and understood an explanation of this research project. I understand that I am invited to take part in focus group interviews, one at each of two of the regional workshops (in February and July). The focus groups will be of around one-and-a-half hours duration.

(*Please circle that which applies)*

I agree to participate in focus group interview/s about the project,

and to having my comments recorded at the group/s   YES   NO

My consent to participate means that:

My name will not be on my comments made at the focus group interviews

I have the right not to answer any question during the focus group interviews;

I will be offered the opportunity to see and amend sections of

the focus group records during the focus group meeting, and to

check the notes.

I can say no to further participation in the research before the

second focus group in July 2009.

Provisionally Registered Teacher's/Mentee's FULL NAME:

First name _____ Family name _____

(please print)

Signature_____   Date_____

Participant Confidentiality Agreement

This form will be stored confidentially for two years
after the completion of the research

I _____(Please print your full name) agree to keep confidential all information
discussed or revealed during the focus group interviews for the project, *Induction and mentoring pilot
programme, New Zealand Kindergartens Incorporated (February-December 2009).*

I will not disclose, keep, or copy any information relating to:

the focus group interviews

the focus group interview participants.

Signature_____

Date_____

Appendix B: Focus group questions

FINAL QUESTIONS, FOCUS GROUP ONE (February 2009)

- Revisit the information sheet and consent form
- Discuss and establish confidentiality ground rules
- Signing of confidentiality agreement form.

Before we start asking questions, would you like any more information about the research project?

We recognise and value your experience in the mentoring role, and appreciate your willingness to take part in this focus group discussion.

From your experience as mentors (or head teachers, centre managers/supervisors):

1. What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

2. How do you expect these regional workshops to impact on your mentoring practice?

Turning now to the NZ Teachers Council *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand:*

3. How useful do you expect the Draft Guidelines will be in leading to PRTs' full registration?

Probes: In regard to their becoming:

a. Effective teachers for diverse learners? *(vision statement p. 4)*

b. Professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry?

4. How useful do you expect the Draft Guidelines will be for mentor development and quality mentoring *(pp.5-6)*?

Probes: What do you suggest would support your further development as mentors?

What do you suggest would support and enhance the quality of your mentoring?

5. Thinking about the NZ Kindergartens mentoring model (programme) overall:

What do you (as mentors…) expect of the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction pilot model (programme)?

Probes: As well as the workshops, the overall model includes, for example:

- an on-line facility, and on-line discussions?
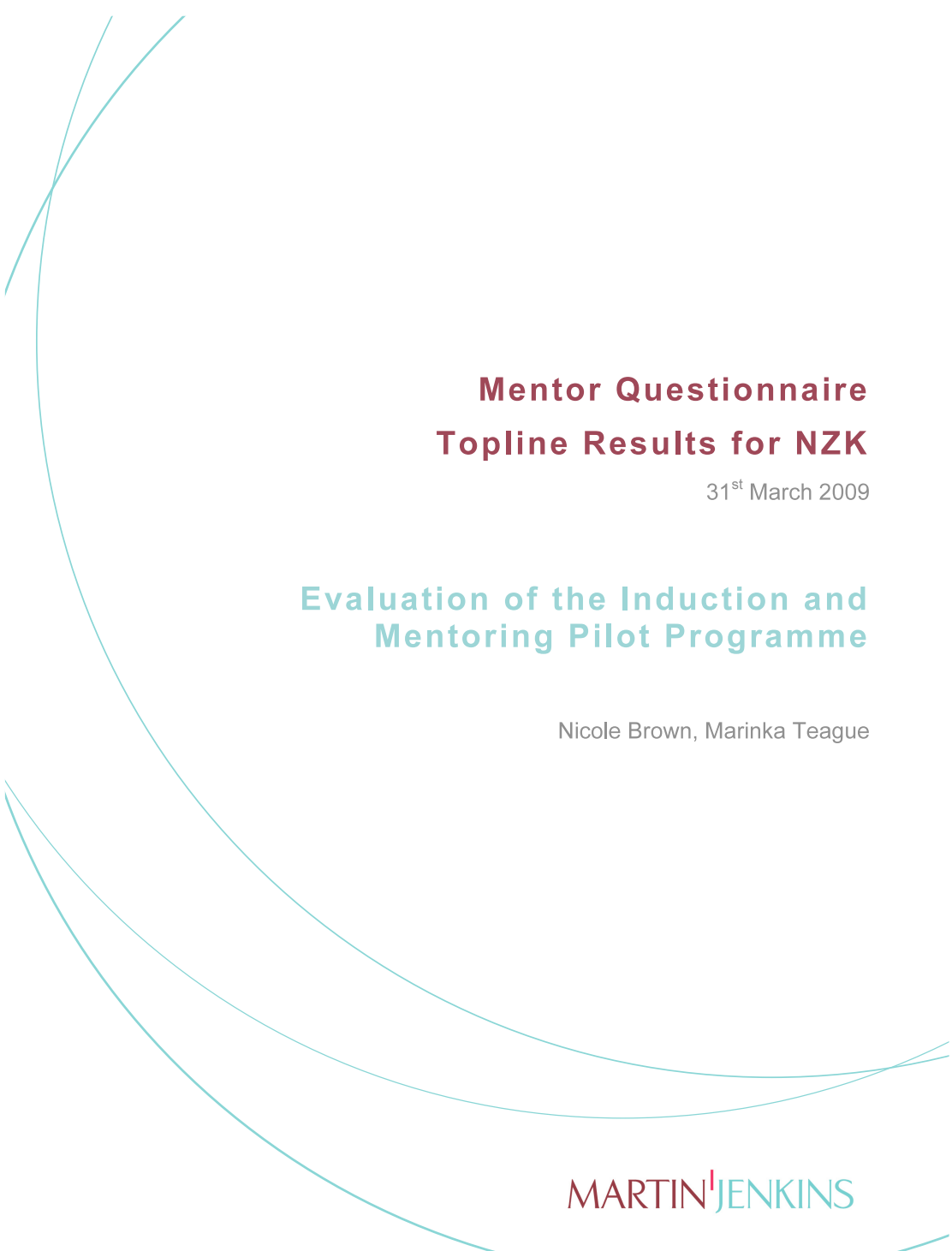- contact between mentors and PRTs?

6. How do you expect the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction programme to impact on the PRTs (mentees') teaching practice in centres/kindergartens?

7. Is there anything you would like to see done differently at the next regional workshop for mentors (and head teachers, centre managers/supervisors)?

FINAL QUESTIONS, FOCUS GROUP TWO (July 2009)

- Revisit the information sheet and consent form
- Discuss and (re)establish confidentiality ground rules
- Signing of confidentiality agreement form.

From your experience as mentors (or head teachers, ECE centre managers/supervisors)

1. What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

2. To what extent is attendance at these regional workshops changing your mentoring practice? In what ways?

3. To what extent are the regional workshops impacting on the PRTs (mentees') teaching practice in ECE centress/kindergartens? How?

Turning again to the NZ Teachers Council *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand:*

4. How useful are the Draft Guidelines in leading to PRTs' full registration?

Probes: In regard to:

a. Effective teachers for diverse learners? *(vision statement p. 4).*

b. Professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry?

5. How useful are the Draft Guidelines for mentor development and quality mentoring *(pp.5-6)*?

6. Would you recommend any changes to the Guidelines? (*If yes*, what specific changes?)

7. Is there anything else you would like to say about:
   - the regional workshops?
   - NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction model (programme) overall?

Probes:

- the on-line facility, and on-line discussions?

- contact between mentors and PRTs?

FINAL QUESTIONS, FOCUS GROUP ONE (February 2009)

- Revisit the information sheet and consent form
- Discuss and establish confidentiality ground rules
- Signing of confidentiality agreement form.

Before we start asking questions, would you like any more information about the research project?

We recognise and value your experience as Provisionally Registered Teachers who have graduated from a Teacher Education programme, and appreciate your willingness to take part in this focus group discussion.

From your experience as Provisionally Registered Teachers (mentees)

1. What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

2. How do you expect these regional workshops to impact on your teaching practice in kindergartens/ECE centress?

Thinking about the NZ Kindergartens mentoring programme overall:

3. What do you (as mentees…) expect of the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction pilot model (pilot programme) overall?

Probes: As well as the workshops, the overall model includes, for example:

- an on-line facility, and on-line discussions?
- contact between mentors and PRTs?

4. How do you expect the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction model (programme) to impact on your teaching practice (as PRTs) in ECE centress/kindergartens?

Probes:

Teaching practice in relation to your being: *(Guidelines, vision statement p. 4)*

a. Effective teachers for diverse learners?

b. Professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry?

5. Is there anything you would like to see done differently at the next regional workshop for Provisionally Registered Teachers (mentees)?

6. Is there anything else you would like to say about:

- the regional workshops?
- NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction model/programme overall?

FINAL QUESTIONS, FOCUS GROUP TWO (July 2009)

- Revisit the information sheet and consent form
- Discuss and (re)establish confidentiality ground rules
- Signing of confidentiality agreement form.

From your experience as Provisionally Registered Teachers (mentees)

1. What are you finding most useful at this regional workshop?

2. To what extent are these regional workshops changing your teaching practice in kindergartens/ECE centres? In what ways?

Thinking about the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring programme overall; as PRTs/mentees:

3. To what extent is the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction pilot programme meeting your expectations? How?

Probes: As well as the workshops, the programme/model includes, for example:

- an on-line facility, and on-line discussions?
- contact between mentors and PRTs?

4. How is the NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction programme impacting on your teaching practice, (as PRTs) in centres/kindergartens?

Probes:

Teaching practice in relation to your being: *(Guidelines, vision statement p. 4)*

a. Effective teachers for diverse learners?

b. Professionally engaged teachers committed to ongoing inquiry?

5. Is there anything else you would like to say about:

- the regional workshops?
- NZ Kindergartens' mentoring and induction model/programme overall?
- the NZ Teachers Council's *Draft Guidelines for Induction and Mentoring Programmes and for Mentor Teacher Development in Aotearoa New Zealand.* [Or the draft *Registered Teacher Criteria*]?

Appendix C: Mentors' survey: MartinJenkins

Mentor Questionnaire
Topline Results for NZK

31st March 2009

Evaluation of the Induction and Mentoring Pilot Programme

Nicole Brown, Marinka Teague

MARTIN JENKINS

Preface

This report has been prepared for New Zealand Kindergarten by Nicole Brown and Marinka Teague from MartinJenkins (Martin, Jenkins & Associates Limited).

MartinJenkins is a New Zealand-based consulting firm providing strategic management support to clients in the public, private and not-for-profit sectors.

Our over-riding goal is to build the effectiveness of the organisations we work with. We do this by providing strategic advice and practical support for implementation in the areas of:

- organisational strategy, design and change

- public policy and issues management

- evaluation and research

- financial and economic analysis

- human resource management.

MartinJenkins was established in 1993, and is privately owned and directed by Doug Martin, Kevin Jenkins, Michael Mills and Nick Davis.

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Figure 2 years of mentoring experience

Figure 3 No.s of PRTs mentored

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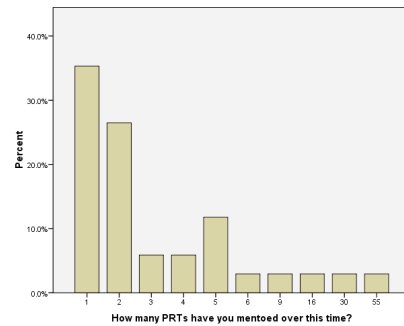
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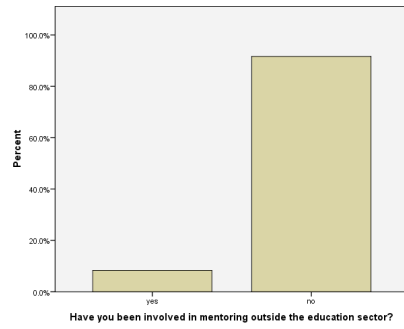
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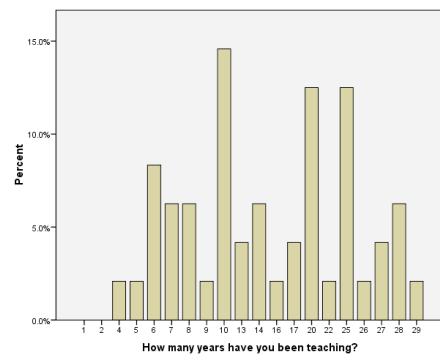
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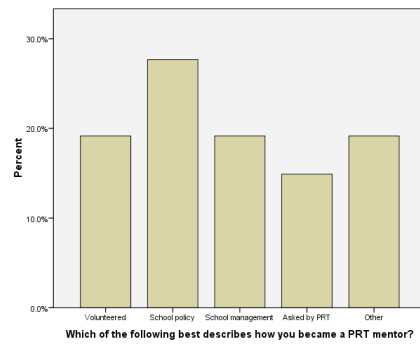
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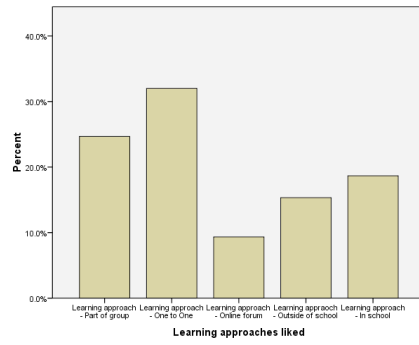
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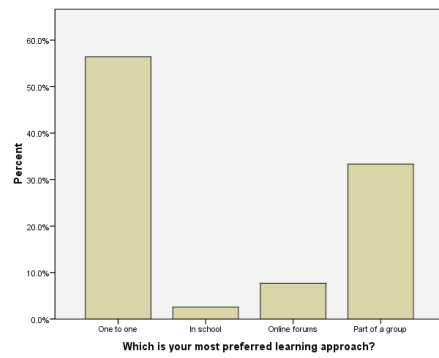
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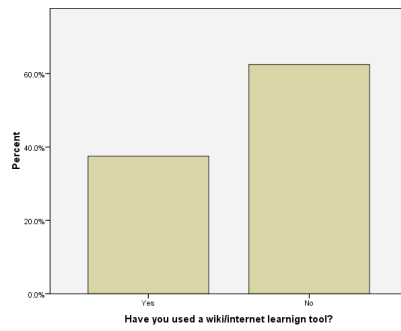
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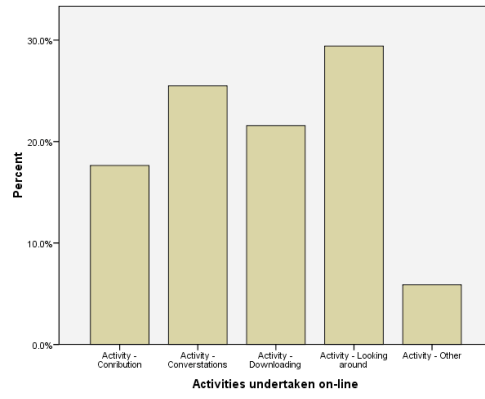
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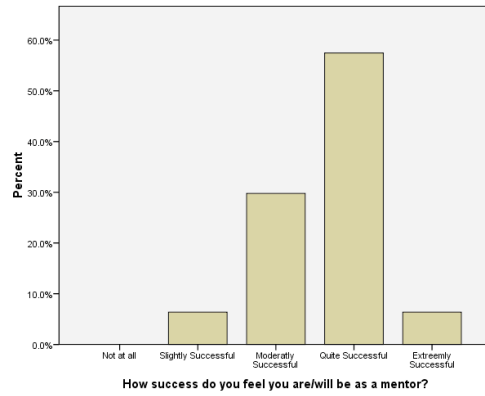
Perceptions of own mentoring practice (against the *Draft Guidelines*)

Key skill areas: Importance, frequency of use and mentors self ratings:

Note that the 'spider' graph below shows mentors' responses on three dimensions: the first being the *importance* of the skills listed. The most important skills are therefore Communication skills (i.e. at the 'top of the circle) followed by Relationship skills, Leadership skills, Observational skills, etc (i.e. moving clockwise around the graph, such that Organisational skills are considered 'least' important).Two other dimensions are represented by the coloured lines: the frequency with which mentors use each of these skills and their personal assessment of their own skills (i.e. ability) in each area. The results are based on averages for each question asked rather than actual percentages and differences are small. (At present we haven't tested for *statistically* significant differences because the differences are so small)

The overall patterns are positive and indicate that mentors draw upon the skills that they think are most important, most often, and use less important skills less often. Overall, mentors rate their own skills positively, (i.e. between 3- know enough but feel I should know more; 4 'quite comprehensive' and 5 excellent) for all areas. Gaps between the two lines indicate that mentors have a tendency to rate their skills more conservatively in areas they consider more important, i.e. communication, relationship and leadership skills.

Figure 12 Perceived importance, frequent use and assessment of required mentor _skills_
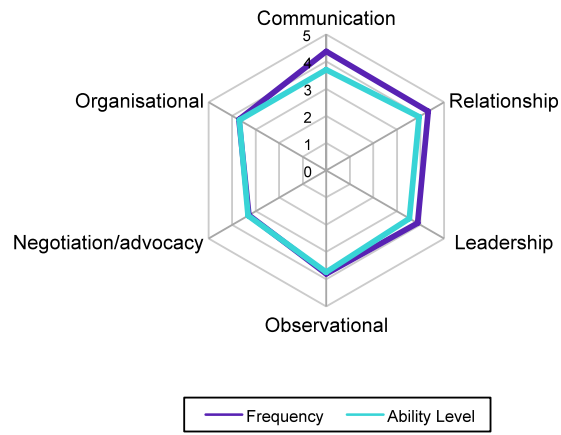
Key personal attributes: Importance, frequency of use and mentors self ratings:

Figure 13 Perceived importance, frequent use and assessment of required *personal attributes***

Demonstrate professional leadership

Advocate on behlaf of PRT

Constructive challenging conversations with PRTs

Maintain PRT enthusiasm

Demonstrate teaching influence on equitable outcomes

Cultural advice to support Te Reo me ona Tikianga

Demonstrate effective teaching to PRT

— Frequency   — Ability level
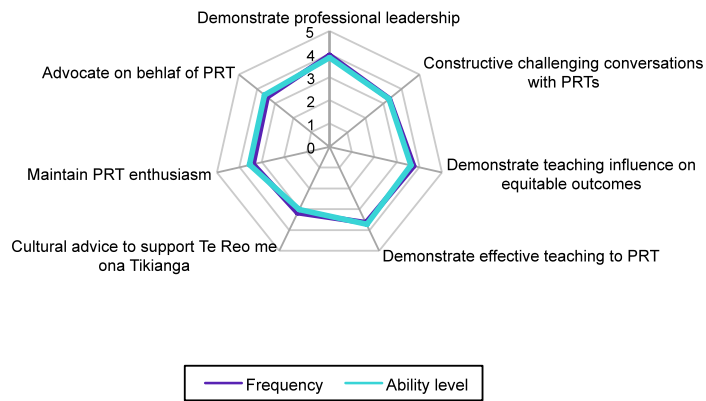
In terms of personal attributes, the close alignment in this spider graph shows that mentors draw upon different personal attributes similarly regardless of how important they consider them. They draw upon their ability to engage PRTs in 'challenging conversations' less often *relative* to other personal attributes, even though this is considered very important, and also rate their ability in this area (and ability to provide cultural advice slightly lower) relative to other personal attributes.

Key knowledge areas: Importance, frequency of use and mentors self ratings:

Figure 14 Perceived importance, frequent use and assessment of required _knowledge_
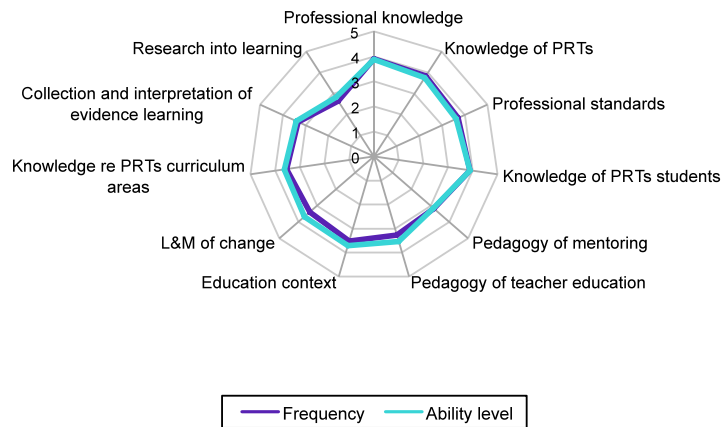
In term of knowledge, mentors perceive 'practice-based' knowledge (i.e. knowledge of PRTs, and their students and professional standards – highlighted blue) as more important to effective mentoring than knowledge that could be considered more 'theory-based' (e.g. pedagogy of teacher education, leadership and management of change and research into learning) which are positioned on the far side of the circle.

In this instance mentors tend to rate their knowledge more conservatively in areas they consider less important and which they draw upon relatively less often, most notably, research into learning, which is drawn on 'every now and then (2)– to 'quite often' (3) an given an average score of 2.6. Mentor also rated their knowledge in this area similarly, giving an average score of 2.8), equating to 'underdeveloped in some respects (2), 'know enough but feel I should know more' (3).

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Mentor's perceptions of the *Draft Guidelin*

Bar chart. Y-axis: Percent (0.0% to 50.0%). X-axis: "How would you describe your awareness of the draft guidelines?" Categories: Not aware (~2%), Aware but not read (~18%), Aware but not certain of specifics (~44%), Aware familiar with content (~35%).
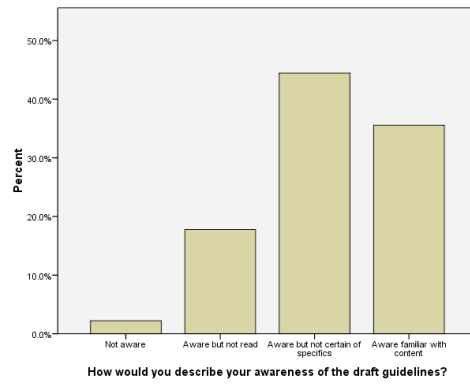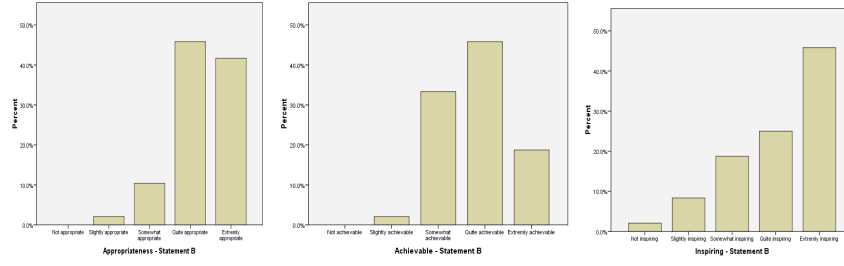
Statement A: An effective mentor is a reflective practitioner focused on inquiry into their own and others' professional practice and learning – based on a clear understanding of outstanding teaching

Figure 15 Views on Vision Statement A

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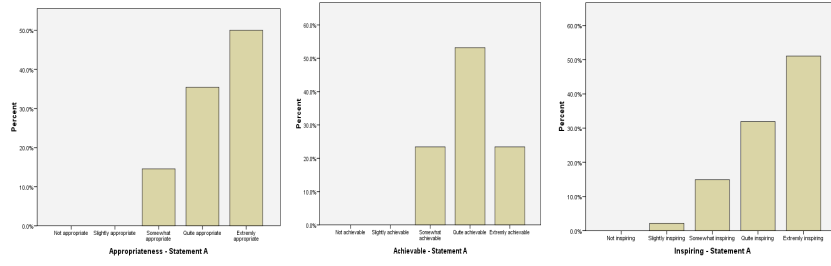
Statement B: An effective mentor acts as a change agent and educational leader, dedicated to facilitating growth in professional capability of colleagues they specifically support and to the wider learning community

Figure 16 Views on Vision Statement B

Statement C: An effective mentor has a sound knowledge and skill base for their role and can establish respectful and effective mentoring relationships

Figure 17 Views on Vision Statement C
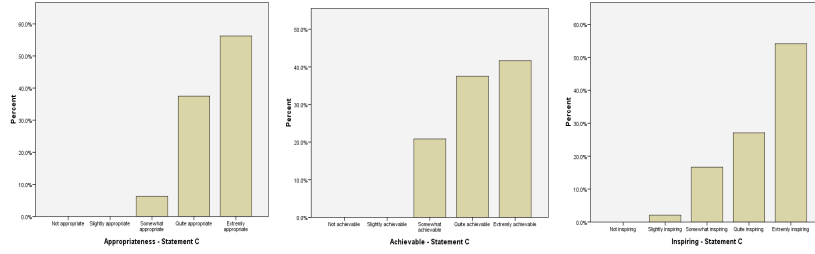
Perceptions about what the role of effective mentor should include

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Mentor role includes - Suggest PD based on needs

Mentor role includes - Advocate for PRTs entitlement

Mentor role includes - Demonstrate effective teaching

Mentor role includes - Listen to and help PRT solve problems

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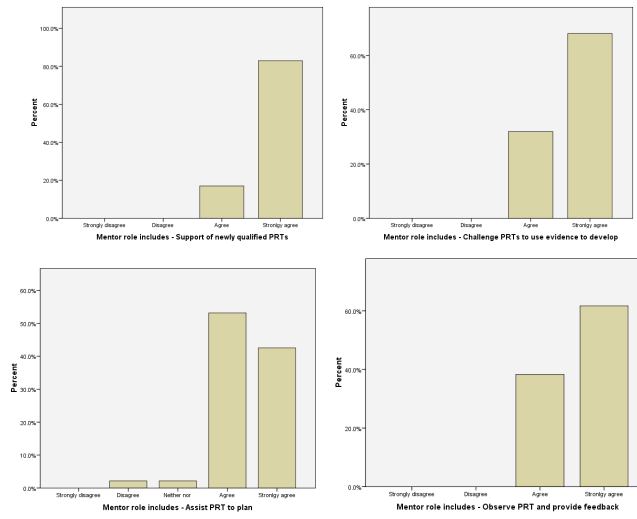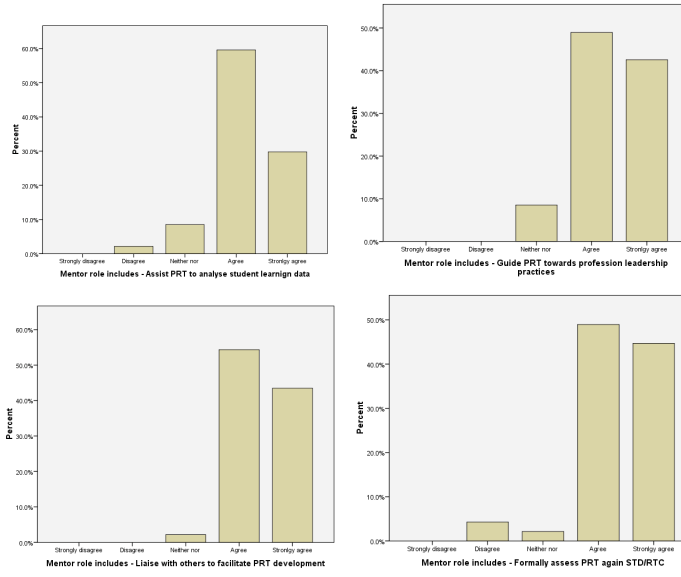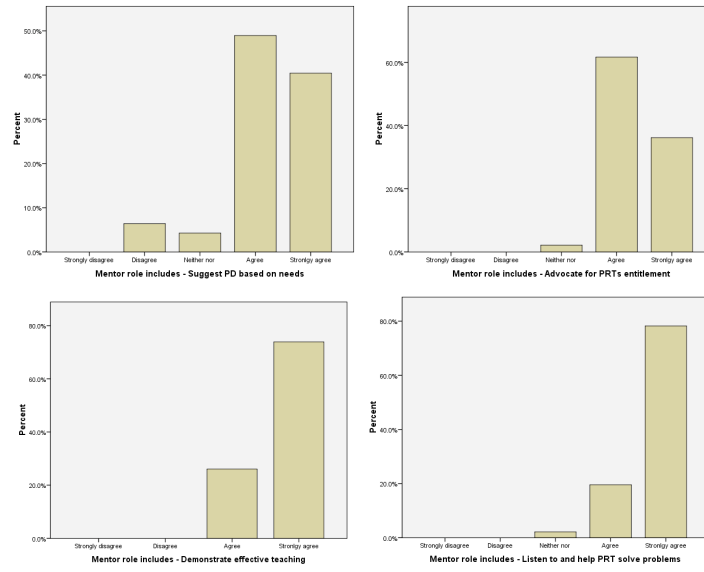
NZK specific questions

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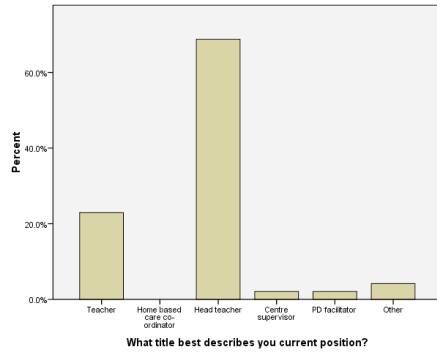
Figure 19 no of teaching staff at mentors' school
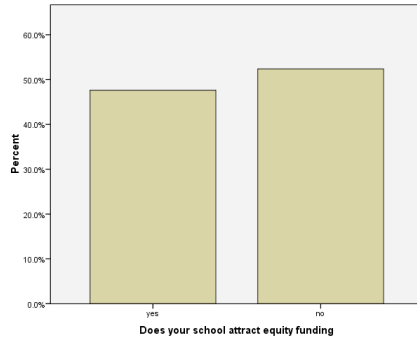
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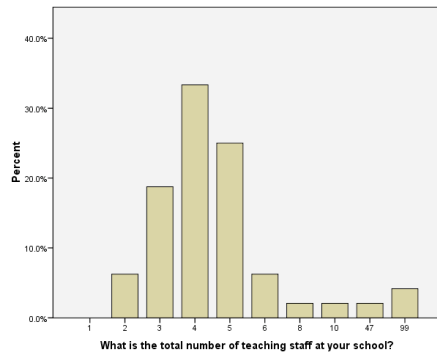
Figure 20 receipt of equity funding
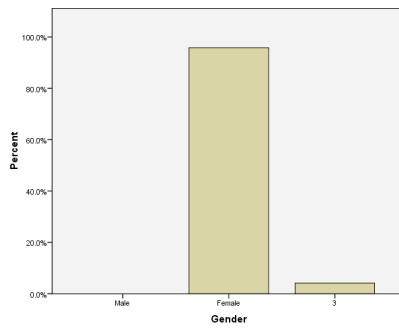

Figure 21 Mentor age range
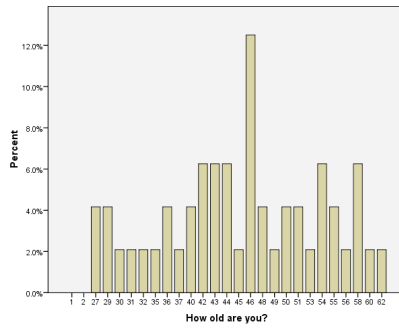
Figure 22 Mentor gender

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Figure 23 Mentor ethnicity