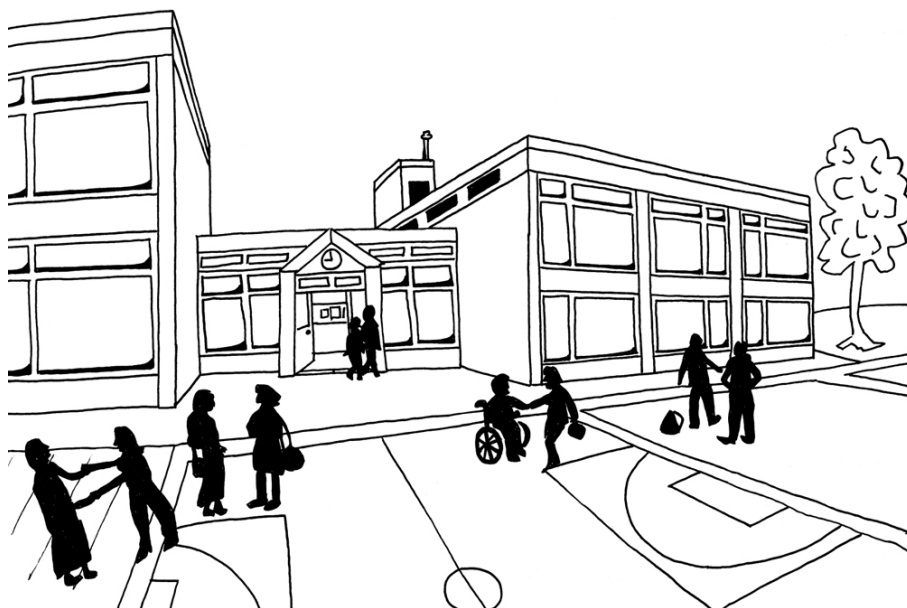


A report about Special Education

**What people have said
about how to make
Special Education better**



**Easy Read information
October 2015**



October 2015

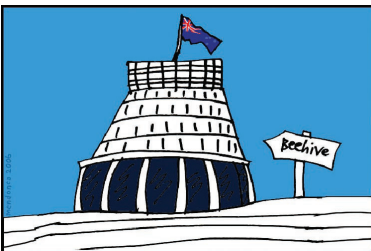
ISBN 978-0-478-16795-5 (Print)

A message from the Minister of Education



Hello

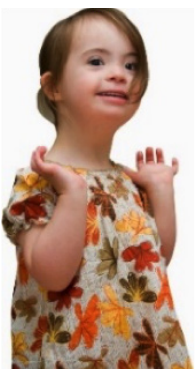
My name is Hekia Parata.



I work for the New Zealand Government as the **Minister of Education**.

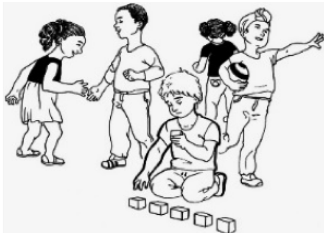


I work together with part of the Government called the **Ministry of Education** to look after schools and learning in New Zealand.



The Ministry wants to make sure that schools do a good job for children who need extra help to learn.

We know schools are getting better at meeting the needs of students with special education needs.



Most disabled children now go to mainstream schools and early childhood centres.



We also know that some students still:

- need more help with learning at school
- find it hard to get help with their learning.



The Ministry of Education wants to make sure that these learners also get the help they need.



2010

In 2010 **the Ministry** took a close look at Special Education in schools.

We made some changes to make Special Education better.



2015

In 2015 **the Ministry** had another look at Special Education.

We have held 156 meetings around New Zealand.

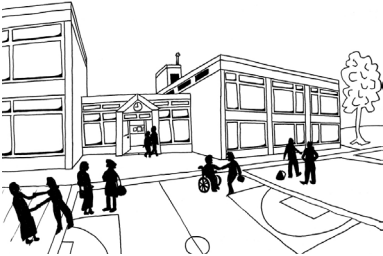


We have met with:

- young people
- whānau and families
- teachers
- people who know a lot about special education.



At these meetings we talked with people about:



- what is not working in Special Education
- how to make things better
- how to make sure children, teachers, whānau and families all feel included
- how to make it easier and faster to get help for children and young people with extra learning needs.



People at the meetings said there were **6 main areas where things could be better** in Special Education.



People said there should be:

1. better support and training for all teachers



2. better information for families and whānau so they can be part of their child's education

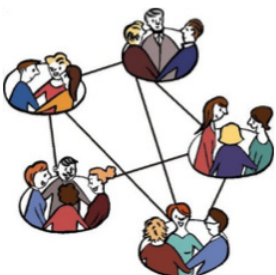


3. easy and clear ways to get help

4. better sharing of information between all the organisations working with disabled children and young people



5. an easy way to change schools



6. a system that works better and is easy to understand.

The Ministry of Education is going to:

- make a plan to make learning better for all children with extra learning needs
- take action to sort out these 6 areas
- work together with everyone who works in Special Education
- work on this for the rest of this year and also in 2016
- work to change things in the way that people want
- keep working at making things better for as long as we need to.



This will help us to make better changes to Special Education.

Some of the changes we are going to make are:



- **The Ministry** is going to change how we support families and teachers.
- We will make sure that the extra help we give:
 - is just right for each child or young person
 - is easy to get
 - does not take too long
 - starts from early on in a child's life.
- Families will have one place to go to get the help their child needs.



- An important part of our new way of working will be to work closely with:

- families and whānau



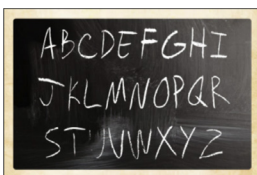
- students

- teachers

- people who know a lot about Special Education.



We will work together to build an education system that makes sure all children can:



- learn



- have a better future.

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Thank you to everyone who spoke up at the meetings and told us their ideas.



The Ministry has made a report about what people said at these meetings.



This is the **Easy Read** version of that report.

Thank you.



Hon. Hekia Parata

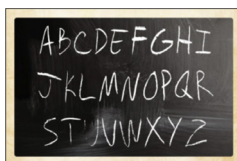
Minister of Education

1. Better training and support for all teachers



The 1st thing that people told **the Ministry** at the meetings was that we need to make sure all teachers have better training and support.

This means teachers in:



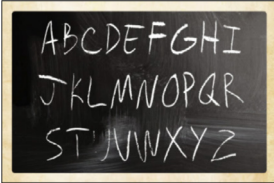
- early childhood centres
- primary schools
- intermediate schools
- high schools.

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People at the meetings said that good teachers make it easier for all children to:

- learn
- feel good about themselves.



This was even more important for children who need extra help to learn.



People at the meetings said:

- good teachers help children to learn in a way that is just right for them
- we need to look at how all teachers can be trained to teach children who learn in different ways





- teachers need to learn:

- how to notice when children need more help
- how to help these children better.



- teachers should:

- feel it is OK to talk about what they think children might need
- be able to share their ideas with family and whānau
- be good at getting the extra help for children who need it.



- universities:

- have a big job to do because they teach the teachers

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- need to make sure teachers know how to teach **all children**
- **must** tell new teachers how and where to get extra help for children who need it.



2. Better information for family and whānau so they can be part of their child's education



The 2nd main thing people told us at the meetings was that family and whānau need to:



- be part of their children's education



- know all the information about their children's education.



- be listened to
- have their ideas heard.

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This will help them to worry less about their children's learning.



It will also give families a better chance to take part in their children's learning.

People also said:



- family and whānau want to be told what help is out there for them and their children.



- They want to know how to get that help.

- family and whānau want to know how their children are going at each step.



- People said that at the moment they don't get this information very often.



- sometimes the information parents get is out of date and doesn't have much detail.
- Information needs to be clear and easy to understand.
- teachers need to get better at getting **data** and using it to make good reports.



Data is information about someone or something.



- **The Ministry** needs to do a good job of helping family and whānau to know:



- what their children need to learn
- how their children can be helped.

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- families need to know about meetings and that they can take part if they wish.



- family and whānau can help their children better when they know all the information they need.



People liked the idea of families having 1 person or place to go to get extra help with learning.



People said it was a good idea for families to get an **advocate** to help them.



An **advocate** is a person who supports people to:

- make sure the services helping them cover everything they need help with
- make sure things are working well between:
 - the person or place where families could go to get extra help with learning
 - the child with extra learning needs
 - all the other people on a child's support team.

3. Easy and clear ways to get help



The 3rd thing people told us at the meetings was that it needs to be easy for families to get support.



People said some things stop children from getting extra support for learning.



Some of the things that make it hard are:

- lots of paper work
- waiting a long time for help
- some children miss out on support due to age or high needs





- the reasons for why some people can get extra help and some cannot are not easy to understand



- there is little information about how to get more support for learning and it can be hard to understand



- experts who are not part of the education system like doctors and social workers find it hard to understand the system too.



Here are some of the ideas people had about how to make it easier to get help:

- have just 1 place for families to go to for help, even if the problems are different

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- help should be given quickly
- getting help should be easy
- who can get extra learning support should be based on the needs of the child.



Help with learning should:



- fit with a person's culture
- be open to all groups of people
- not make people feel bad about using it.



4. Better sharing of information



The 4th thing people told us at the meetings was that support agencies need to work together better.

People said it is important to get help early in a child's life from:



- doctors who work with babies and young children

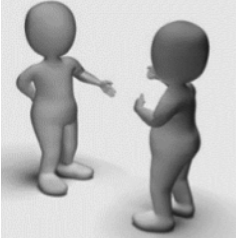


- nurses
- social workers.



People said sometimes the health and education systems do not work well together.

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People working in health and education need to:

- talk to each other
- listen to each other
- share ideas.



If they do these things children will not miss out on help when they need it.

5. It should be easy to change schools



The 5th thing people talked about at the meetings was how changing schools is harder for children who need extra support to learn.



Changing schools for children and young people who need extra help to learn would be easier with better:



- planning



- sharing of information



- support that follows children when they move.

6. The system needs to work better and be easy to understand



The last main thing that people told us was that many people feel the way things are now makes it hard to get for children to get the right help.



Things that stop disabled children and young people getting the right help include:

- **Giving children labels**



A child is often given the label of the name of their disability.

If this happens it can mean that people are not getting to know the child as a person first.



- **Ages**

Children need different learning help at different ages.

Support and help needs to be right for the age of the child.



- **Stages**

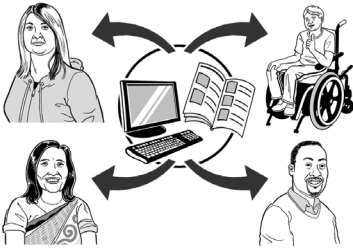
Children go through different stages in their lives.

Help and support needs to be right for the stage a child is at.



These things can all make it hard to get support where and when it is needed.

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People said extra learning support should be given by people:

- with good skills
- who know what is needed and do a good job.



Everyone should use plain language and not **jargon**.

Jargon is when words are used that are hard to understand.

To Do	
1. _____	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. _____	<input type="checkbox"/>

Wellbeing and progress plans should be made for each child who needs extra learning help.

Plans should include:



- children's goals
- children's dreams for the future
- the ideas of family and whānau
- the ideas of teachers.



Plans need to be kept up to date as children grow and change.

More information



More information about the **Special Education Update** is in the full report.



The full report includes the **feedback from the meetings**.



The full report is on this website:

www.education.govt.nz



If you want to know more you can email the Special Education part of the Ministry at:

special.education@education.govt.nz



**This has been translated into Easy Read by
People First New Zealand Inc.
Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi**

