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Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

Special Education 2000: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy Summary of Phase Two - Final Report

Phase Two

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Summary of Phase Two – Final Report

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

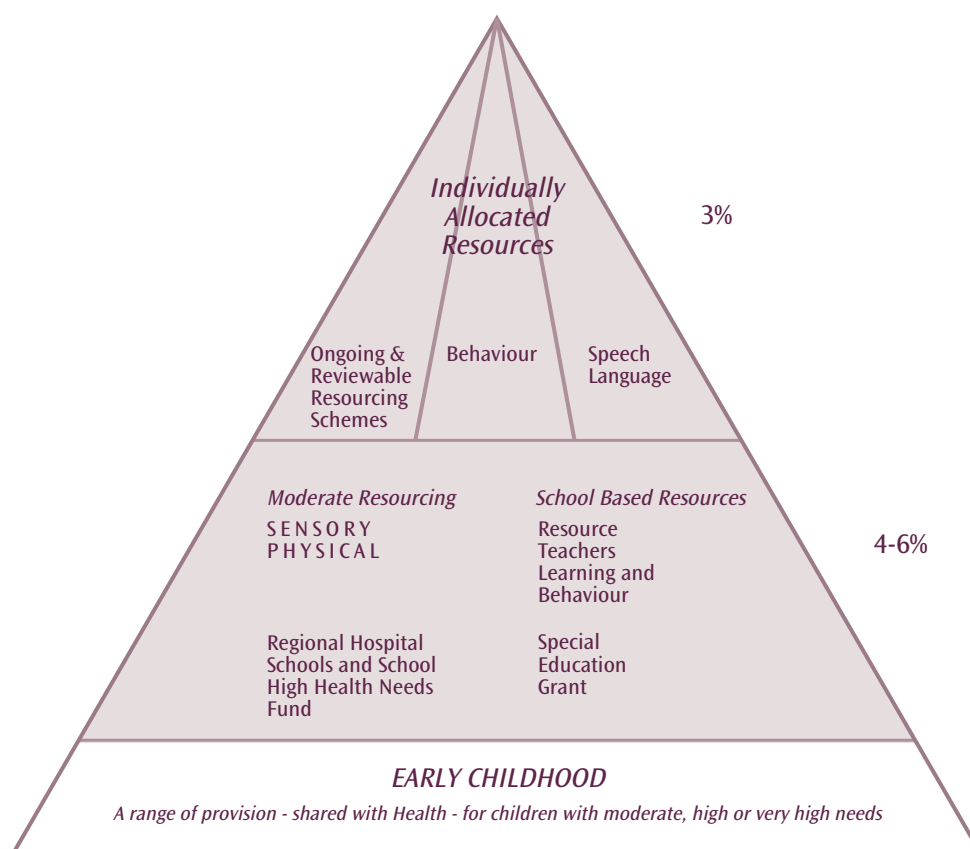


BEST	Behaviour Education Support Team (now known as Behaviour Support Team - BST)
BoT	Board of Trustees
ESW	Education Support Worker
Funder	The entity which decides the details of how the resources are going to be allocated in accordance with the policy parameters decided by Government and makes payment accordingly (Ministry of Education, 1999)
Fundholder	A term usually used in reference to the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme which describes the function of the purchaser, <i>i.e.</i> “the entity which decides what services are to be purchased for a student or group of students” (Ministry of Education, 1999)
GLU	Guidance and Learning Unit
HIPPY	Home Instruction Programme for Preschool Youngsters
IDP	Individual Development Programme
IEP	Individual Educational Plan (Programme)
MoE	Ministry of Education
ORS	Ongoing Resourcing Scheme/Ongoing and Transitional Resourcing Scheme
RES	Residential Special School
RTLb	Resource Teacher: Learning and Behaviour
RTSN	Resource Teacher Special Needs
SBI	Severe Behaviour Initiative
SEDA	Special Education Discretionary Assistance
SEG	Special Education Grant
SEPG	Special Education Policy Guidelines
SES	Specialist Education Services
SE2000	Special Education 2000
SLI	Speech-Language Initiative
SLT	Speech-Language Therapy/Therapist

What is Special Education 2000?

Special Education 2000 (SE2000) is a government policy introduced in 1996 with the aim of achieving “over the next decade, a world class inclusive education system that provides learning opportunities of equal quality to all students” (Ministry of Education, July 1996). SE2000 restructured the way in which resources and service provision are distributed to learners with special educational needs. It also changed the way schools manage these resources and the way in which major service providers provide support services to learners with specific needs.

The triangle below outlines the percentage of students expected to receive resourcing at the very high, high and moderate levels of Special Education need.



The Ministry of Education commissioned and funded Massey University to evaluate and monitor the policy over a 3-year period (1999–2001). The overall aim of the evaluation is to provide independent monitoring on the implementation of Special Education 2000 policy.

At the time of the Phase Two survey (early 2000) some services had been fully operational longer than others. For example, SEG began in 1997, and ORS began a trial run in July 1997. RTLB was not implemented nationally until 1999, the SLI in 1998, and the SBI in 1999.

This publication is a summary of the second full report, *Special Education 2000: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy - Phase Two Final Report* and copies of the full report can be obtained from the Ministry of Education.

The Evaluation

Phase Two findings build upon those of the first report, *Special Education 2000: Monitoring and Evaluation of the Policy - Phase One Final Report* published by the Ministry of Education in February 2000.

This Phase Two summary briefly outlines results from the strands covered in Phase Two which are:

- Initiatives for students with high to very high needs
 - Ongoing and Transitional Resourcing Schemes (ORS)
 - Severe Behaviour Initiative (SBI)
 - Speech Language Initiative (SLI).
- Initiatives for students with moderate needs
 - Special Education Grant (SEG)
 - Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disability who are not on ORS.
- Initiatives for early childhood.

The summary also covers:

- Issues concerning
 - support services
 - special educational needs of Maori in English-medium schools
 - professional development
 - residential special schools
 - parent and caregiver issues.

The policy strand, Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB) comprises a large collection of data and those findings have been analysed in a separate report. The Phase Two findings reflect, with the exception of the Severe Behaviour Initiative, a general positive trend in all resourcing components of the Special Education 2000 Policy.

A mixed methodology was adopted for Phase Two. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected for statistical and interpretative purposes.

- Data were collected through a national survey completed and returned by 665 primary and secondary schools and through interviews with principals, teachers and teacher-aides in a further 288 schools.
- Teachers from 12 kindergarten and 18 playcentre associations were interviewed on early childhood issues.
- Case studies were conducted in seven residential special schools and in four SES areas for the Severe Behaviour Initiative.

Questions

The Ministry of Education set out 126 questions for the full research contract to cover over the three year period (1999-2001). In all of the strands, data were gathered specific to the Ministry of Education questions from a range of sources. In order to more accurately monitor change over time, Phase One questions were repeated in Phase Two. The general questions across the strands include:

- How do schools define, identify and assess special educational needs? Who is responsible within the schools for doing it?
- What is the incidence of special needs?
- What obstacles to positive outcomes have been identified by schools for the existing programmes/provisions?
- What is the range of service providers now, and how is it changing in response to Special Education 2000?
- Are the specific needs of Maori being addressed adequately by Special Education 2000? If not, what challenges need to be addressed and which methods are appropriate?

Quantitative methodology

The questionnaire comprised 39 items in twelve sections. Some of the questions were developed from the Phase One baseline data to facilitate the monitoring of change through time. Questionnaire items related to high and very high needs and moderate needs; support services; professional development; transition issues from early childhood to school; issues for Maori learners and the parent/school partnership.

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Overview of sample

Questionnaires were sent to 1198 randomly selected educational facilities in March 2000. A total of 665 schools returned the questionnaire. The overall response rate for Phase Two was 56%.

- While the response rate from the various types of schools varied (from 67% special schools, 56% primary schools, 42% secondary schools to 36% area schools), the final sample was in proportion to national figures and therefore representative of the type of schools. For example, 10% of the Phase Two sample were secondary schools and 12% of schools in New Zealand are secondary schools. In the returned sample 2% were from Area schools and these schools make up 2% of schools in New Zealand.
- The highest response rate came from special schools (67%), although this was a lower return than the Phase One response rate of 89%.
- The response rate for primary and intermediate schools was 56%.
- The response rates in terms of location varied considerably
 - the highest return rates were from the Taranaki area (71%), Southland (61%) and Otago (60%). These areas also had high return rates in the Phase One evaluation
 - the Gisborne area returned a 71% response rate in 1999, but during Phase Two this dropped to 49%
 - response rates which were lower than the national average include Waikato (48%) and the West Coast (48%).
- The decile ranking of the schools ranged from 1–10. Of the schools that identified their decile ranking
 - 25% were from low decile schools (1–3)
 - 40% from middle decile schools (4–7)
 - 35% from high decile schools (8–10).

These response rates are similar to those in the 1999 Phase One survey.

Over twelve hundred educators assisted in the completion of the questionnaire. The questionnaire instructions suggested that a “team approach may be required to obtain an accurate picture of your school’s experiences and needs”. It was, however, primarily the principals who were involved. As in Phase One, members of senior management teams (principals, deputy principals and HoD special needs) were those most frequently described as contributing to the questionnaire.

Qualitative fieldwork

This involved:

- Using structured interview schedules of a similar format to the Phase One fieldwork by trained fieldworkers who collected data over a two week period (21-30 March 2000).
- Using the same four areas of Phase One of the evaluation during Phase Two. These were Auckland, East Coast, Central and Canterbury.
- A total of 288 schools participated in the fieldwork. This was a response rate of 92% to the initial invitation to participate. This total comprises
 - 244 primary schools (including intermediate and special schools)
 - 44 secondary schools (including area schools)
 - 246 parents.
- Generally, the schools were representative across the decile rankings, although East Coast schools were mainly in the lower decile ranks.
 - 36% of schools were in the lower decile ranks 1–3
 - 37% in the middle decile ranks 4–7
 - 27% in the high decile ranks 8–10.

Teachers as fieldworkers

- The involvement of 45 teachers as fieldworkers was a key strategy in collecting qualitative data. It was felt that participation as a teacher fieldworker would be beneficial for general teacher professional development in a number of areas.
- The teacher fieldworkers were selected on the basis of their qualifications, experience and knowledge of special education and the Special Education 2000 Policy. They were provided with additional training in the process and protocols associated with the work.
- Only teachers involved in the Phase One survey were used to collect data for Phase Two. Previous participation was considered an important pre-requisite for selection for Phase Two as the intention was to build upon training and development that was started in Phase One.
- With one exception, the teachers were locally based. As the East Coast was short of teacher fieldworkers, an experienced teacher fieldworker from another region collected the data on the East Coast. This technique also allowed the collection of more data from a greater range of geographical areas within a limited time frame of two weeks.

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- The teachers identified four ways in which their teaching role facilitated their work as a fieldworker. These included:
 - communication skills such as listening
 - appreciation and knowledge of school systems
 - an understanding of Special Education 2000 policy and terminology
 - the fact that they were seen by the interviewees as having some credibility within the educational world.
- Teachers benefited personally through participation as a fieldworker in areas such as:
 - networking and reflective practice
 - identifying different strategies in dealing with change
 - increased indepth knowledge of SE2000 policy
 - the opportunity to refine interviewing skills.

The involvement of parents

Schools nominated 246 parents who were interviewed, the majority by telephone. As some parents responded to questions from two initiatives (for example SEG and RTLB) the total number of interviews in relation to the initiatives, is greater than the total number of parents interviewed (see Table 1).

The interviews with parents were conducted using a semi-structured interview schedule developed by the research team. All parents were asked to respond to questions in relation to general issues, support services, professional development (information), and cultural issues. Only those parents whose children were involved in a specific resourcing initiative were invited to answer questions in relation to those strands.

Table 1 Number of parents interviewed by strand

Strand	Parents
ORS	148
SLI	48
SBI	10
RTLB	50
SEG	56
Sensory/Physical	21
Cultural	135
Prof Development	239
Support Services	240
General	243



OVERVIEW OF THE SAMPLE AND GENERAL RESPONSE TO SPECIAL EDUCATION 2000 INITIATIVES

3

Requests for support (by schools responding to the survey) for students with high and moderate needs

- 4919 requests for support were made on behalf of learners with high or moderate needs.
- Of those requesting support, the success rates were
 - 36% of the applications for ORS
 - 90% for SLI
 - 90% for RTLB
 - 85% for sensory impairment and/or physical disability not on ORS.
 - 74% for SBI.
- Of those who requested a review in ORS, a further 77 students were successful, bringing the overall success rate of ORS applications to 54% (see Table 2).

Table 2 Percentage of applications by initiative

	Phase One %	Phase Two %
ORS	43	19
SBI	8	8
SLI	14	16
RTLB	35	57

The percentage of applications made on behalf of Maori learners is comparative to the percentage from the Phase One data. The table below shows that overall the highest percentages of applications made for Maori learners are mainly for the SBI and RTLB initiatives (see Table 3).

Table 3 Applications made on behalf of Maori learners

	Phase One %	Phase Two %
ORS	24	21
SBI	39	38
SLI	21	25
RTLB	33	32

3

Students receiving support from the Special Education 2000 resourcing initiatives

- A total of 4840 students were identified as receiving funding or support.
- The majority of students received funding through ORS (1970), and support through the RTLB service (1930).
- A total of 549 students received support from the SLI and 228 from SBI.

Ethnicity issues

An ethnic breakdown of students receiving funding or support from the SE2000 initiatives is outlined in Table 4.

- Maori learners were represented highly in two initiatives which were disproportionately higher than the 20% of Maori learners currently within the school system (Ministry of Education, 1998).
 - SBI (34%)
 - RTLB (35%).
- The number of Maori learners receiving funding or support increased
 - in the RTLB service from 26% in Phase One to 35% in Phase Two
 - in SLI from 16% in Phase One to 23% in Phase Two.
- The percentage of Maori receiving support declined
 - through ORS from 26% to 20%
 - through the SBI from 37% to 34%.
- Pacific Nations' students received support through all initiatives
 - ORS (9%)
 - SBI (6%)
 - SLI (9%)
 - RTLB (11%)
 - non ORS Sensory and/or Physical (8%).

Table 4 Ethnic breakdown of students receiving support through the Special Education 2000 initiatives in this sample

	Maori	Pacific Nations	NZ European	Other	Total
ORS	394 (20%)	176 (9%)	1265 (64%)	135 (7%)	1970
SBI	77 (34%)	13 (6%)	133 (58%)	5 (2%)	228
SLI	127 (23%)	51 (9%)	335 (61%)	36 (7%)	549
RTLB	671 (35%)	211 (11%)	895 (46%)	153 (8%)	1930
Non ORS Sensory or Physical	33 (20%)	13 (8%)	105 (64%)	12 (8%)	163

Gender issues

- Of the 4840 students identified as receiving some form of support through SE2000 initiatives, nearly 70% were male. Within all funding or resourcing components, male students were disproportionately represented. This was most significant in SBI where 96% of students were male. In the RTLB initiative 75% were male, and in the SLI 71% were male.
- The percentage of male students receiving support in ORS in this sample, is 61% which compares with a national average of 62%.

Suspension

- Schools reported that 1600 students were suspended from school in this phase.
- In all cases where there was a high suspension rate of 70 students or over within the one school, the schools were secondary schools.
- An ethnic breakdown of the suspension data shows that
 - 39% were Maori
 - 10% from Pacific Nations
 - 48% New Zealand European/Pakeha
 - 3% Other.
- Twenty eight percent of these students were in receipt of funding or support from the SE2000 initiatives. This compares with the Phase One data where 22% of suspended students were in receipt of some SE2000 support.
- A high rate of Maori suspensions across all the SE2000 resourcing strands was noted (50%), but it was particularly high in SBI (53%) and SEG (59%).

3

Fundholder schools

The term fundholder was defined as a term usually used in reference to the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme which describes the function of purchaser, i.e. the entity which decides what services are to be purchased for a student or group of students.

- Of the schools who indicated they were fundholders for ORS, 13% indicated they were an accredited fundholder.
- A further 14% noted they used another school (other than SES) to act as their fundholder.

Overall satisfaction with Special Education 2000 initiatives

The question *Are students with special educational needs in the following initiatives getting a better deal now than before Special Education 2000?* was asked in 1999 and 2000 (see Table 5).

- The schools indicated their greatest satisfaction came from the moderate needs initiatives RTLB and SEG, followed by ORS.
- The SBI initiative continued to have a relatively low percentage of students “mostly” getting a better deal than before Special Education 2000.

Table 5 Are students getting a better deal now than before Special Education 2000?

	Mostly			In Some Cases			Seldom			Don't Know			Non Response		
	M	P	OEG	M	P	OEG	M	P	OEG	M	P	OEG	M	P	OEG
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Severe Behaviour Initiative (SBI)	6	7	4	8	9	3	11	12	7	16	16	14	59	56	72
Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS)	20	32	13	11	17	7	8	10	6	9	8	8	52	33	66
Speech-Language Initiative (SLI)	8	11	5	9	12	6	11	15	8	10	10	10	62	52	71
Special Education Grant (SEG)	23	26	15	20	25	13	11	12	8	4	4	4	42	33	60
Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour RTLB	26	33	17	20	24	13	9	9	5	5	5	5	40	29	60
Sensory Impairment and/or Physical Disability	6	8	4	6	7	4	4	5	2	20	21	18	64	59	72
A Better Deal Overall	13	17	10	23	25	15	10	11	7	5	5	5	49	42	63

M=Maori

P=Pakeha

OEG=Other Ethnic Groups

Schools were asked specific questions which related to their satisfaction of SE2000 in *principle* (see Table 6) and in *practice* (see Table 7).

- The level of satisfaction in *principle* has gone down in all the high to very high needs initiatives (ORS, SLI, SBI). The greatest decline in level of satisfaction is for the SBI from 36% in Phase One to 21% in Phase Two.
- In all the moderate initiatives (SEG and RTLB), the level of satisfaction in *principle* has risen.
- In *practice* there is a more positive trend, particularly for the moderate needs initiatives. The level of satisfaction for SEG and ORS has gone up by 10% and by 20% for RTLB.
- The level of dissatisfaction in *practice* has decreased in all initiatives except for the SBI where the level of dissatisfaction remains constant.

Table 6 Satisfaction levels of Special Education 2000 initiatives in Principle (1999 and 2000)

	Very Satisfied/Satisfied %		Very Dissatisfied/Dissatisfied %	
	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase One	Phase Two
In Principle				
SBI	36	21	25	20
ORS	57	51	24	24
SLI	34	30	14	13
SEG	42	53	25	24
RTLB	64	70	15	14

Table 7 Satisfaction levels of Special Education 2000 initiatives in Practice (1999 and 2000)

	Very Satisfied/Satisfied %		Very Dissatisfied/Dissatisfied %	
	Phase One	Phase Two	Phase One	Phase Two
In Practice				
SBI	16	17	25	25
ORS	39	49	34	27
SLI	22	26	19	15
SEG	37	47	34	29
RTLB	49	64	23	17



PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH HIGH/VERY HIGH NEEDS

4

Ongoing and Transitional Resourcing Scheme (ORS)

This initiative aims to support students with high or very high needs throughout their school years. At the time of data collection for Phase Two, there were 7080 verified students on the scheme (Ministry of Education, June 2000). The scheme aims to provide students with guaranteed continuity of support and schools with appropriate assistance in developing effective programmes to meet their needs. Additional funding to the fundholder for students who attend rural schools began in 2000 (Update for Schools, Issue 10, 1999). This funding is intended to ensure that students get access to specialist support and therapies irrespective of geographical location.

Results and implications

Generally the responses to many of the questions both in interview and in the questionnaire were answered more positively in Phase Two than in Phase One. This may be partly the result of the SE2000 policy becoming better understood by practitioners. Parents with ORS funded children who were interviewed for the first time in Phase Two were also generally positive about funding and provisions for their children.

- The majority of parents (79%) said the ORS funding was either satisfactory (40%) or adequate (39%).
 - one in six parents felt that their child needed more one-to-one help and that their school needed more teacher-aides
 - 52% of parents were satisfied with the verification process
 - 86% were either satisfied with the school's consultative process over their application for ORS funding or satisfied to leave it to the school.
- Parents were asked whether there had been any changes for their child as a result of being funded by ORS.
 - the majority (53%) said that there had been a number of positive changes associated with improved learning for their child and improved liaison with the school
 - 27% said there was no change
 - and approximately 10% said there had been either a slight deterioration or they were unsure.

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- Schools were asked in the questionnaire whether they thought ORS funded students were getting a better deal now than before SE2000.
 - 20% of Maori and 32% of Pakeha were reported to be mostly getting a better deal
 - this compares slightly more positively than for Phase One.
- Schools were asked in the questionnaire, whether they thought the level of support or service provided for ORS funded students had improved since the introduction of SE2000.
 - 33% said it had
 - 27% said it had not
 - 21% said it remained the same
 - 19% did not respond
 - this is a less favourable result than responses from the interviews might have suggested.
- Schools were asked how well the needs of ORS funded students were being met through professional development programmes.
 - results indicated that they were being very well met in 16% of cases
 - partially well met in 25% of cases
 - this is slightly up on Phase One.
- Schools were asked for their satisfaction level with the management of funds for ORS.
 - 11% said that it was very satisfactory
 - 50% said that it was satisfactory
 - this is slightly up on Phase One.
- In securing special education funding in the transition from early childhood centres to schools, the major role was taken by principals and other staff, special needs teams and co-ordinators. A small number of early childhood centres (10) were also reported to have taken a leading role.
 - the transition could have been better facilitated by more co-operation between schools and early childhood centres.
 - early childhood centres said they were inexperienced in filling out application forms for funding.
 - their lack of information and knowledge could be prejudicing the claims of the children.

- Some parents said that in the transition of their children from early childhood centres to schools they were unable to access the school of their choice unless their child had qualified for ORS funding.
 - a number of parents felt there was a need to increase the percentage of ORS funded children
 - some parents felt that marginally excluded ORS funded students were not wanted at some schools because there was not sufficient SEG funding to meet their needs.
- Most of the changes in the co-ordination and interaction between school and service providers as a result of SE2000 were reported to be positive. These centred on
 - more co-operation and better communication
 - greater accountability and better support and co-ordination with IEPs
 - a number of principals said that there was minimal help and communication with SES
 - it was reported that RTLBs were assisting ORS funded students.
- There were few changes evident in the co-ordination between school and families.
 - a small number of principals noted that parents were becoming more knowledgeable about SE2000 policy and more assertive
 - it was sometimes difficult to meet their expectations.
- During interviews, teachers were asked how they were responding to the need to ensure curriculum access for children on ORS. The use of teacher-aides, IEPs and adaptation of the curriculum were reported to be the main measures.
- Teachers were asked what they thought the educational outcomes were for children on ORS. Many found this a difficult question to answer. The majority who responded emphasised improvement in
 - social skills and developmental outcomes
 - learning outcomes such as reading, language and motor skills.

4

Severe Behaviour Initiative (SBI)

This is an initiative to support students with high or very high behaviour needs. SBI is designed to serve an estimated 1% of the student population, approximately 7,000 students nationally who show the most extreme behaviour difficulties in school and in the classroom.

Since the Phase One evaluation data collection, SBI has undergone changes in the structure of services offered to schools and learners. SBI was not meeting the needs of schools with students with severe behavioural difficulties, in particular secondary schools. The Specialist Education Service behaviour teams are now beginning to take a more flexible approach, which involves tailoring service to meet the varied needs of the schools and students. There is now a range of services available including brief consultations and shorter duration interventions which offer a progression of services to the intensive comprehensive assessment and intervention (Ministry of Education Update, November 1999).

Results and implications

The students identified as receiving support through the quantitative and qualitative sections of Phase Two were largely male (96% survey; 100% case study). There was a disproportionately high percentage of Maori students (37%) receiving support through the SBI. The provision of services to learners with severe behaviour difficulties raised issues about the implementation, service delivery and effectiveness of the service. While some problems were attributed to the multi-element model adopted by SES, other factors that inhibited the successful implementation of the model involved child, family and school considerations.

- From the four case studies, the qualitative fieldwork and the questionnaire several factors were identified which impacted on the successful implementation of the Behaviour Education Support Team (BEST) service.
 - BEST provides a comprehensive model for assessment but not for intervention. As the intervention process was detailed during the evaluation, some schools were less satisfied than others. The overall satisfaction in *principle* with SBI (BEST) indicated that 21% were satisfied/very satisfied and 20% were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied. When asked about overall satisfaction in *practice* 17% respondents were satisfied/very satisfied and 24% were dissatisfied/very dissatisfied.
 - intervention relies on schools to provide the practical application of theoretical advice from BEST.
 - it appeared that some BEST workers did not understand the school context when identifying appropriate interventions.

- it is essential to have commitment from the school, which involves additional teacher time.
- to be effective, BEST caseloads need to remain low.

Schools in general, found it difficult to accept the positive multi-element model initially preferred by BEST. This led to an initial impression that BESTs were operating poorly. Case studies have revealed that SBI is evolving to allow greater flexibility in the delivery of services. In terms of BEST operation in schools, data from the questionnaire indicate that:

- 16% thought BEST had effectively/very effectively supported classroom teachers
 - 17% thought that the support was ineffective/very ineffective
 - 20% found BEST's response to requests for support to be effective/very effective
 - 15% found them to be ineffective/very ineffective
 - 65% of respondents said that the response to requests for support was important/very important
 - only 8% of respondents felt that BEST had effected a positive educational outcome, and
 - 17% felt that the outcome was ineffective/very ineffective.
- The majority of both primary and secondary teachers believe that 80–100% of students, who require intervention, also require repeated intervention.
 - Generally respondents remain dissatisfied at the school level with the support schools are receiving through the SBI.
 - 17% of respondents thought that support had improved
 - 27% thought it had not, and
 - 18% thought it had remained the same.
 - Teaching style of the teacher is a factor in the successful management and monitoring of the student's behaviour.
 - Communication in secondary schools is essential, and the RTLB link helps with the communication system.
 - Co-operation with home is essential.
 - working with parents/whanau was rated as important/very important by 64% of questionnaire respondents
 - home/school liaison was also rated as important/very important by 64% of questionnaire respondents

4

- BEST members relied on the parents' knowledge of the child's personal history during the assessment phase
 - reliance is also placed on the child and family to identify appropriate reinforcers for positive behaviour
 - 23% of respondents found BEST was effective/very effective in collaborating with parents
 - 9% of respondents found BEST ineffective/very ineffective in collaborating with parents.
- Schools are concerned that learners can easily manipulate the model.
 - 90% of responses from parents indicated that the child, even in secondary school was involved only to the extent of choosing the rewards they would work towards
 - non-involvement of children was justified by one of two comments that either the child would play the system or would not understand the system.

Given the high proportion of children on medication in the selected case study sample (87%), the question of how many children under BEST are on some form of medication is raised.

Speech-Language Initiative (SLI)

This initiative aims to assist students to communicate more effectively and improve their literacy and numeracy skills. Funding was used to provide an increase in speech-language therapy for students, to provide professional development for teachers, to support students with moderate speech-language difficulties. Funding was also allocated to provide services for students who had very high needs for speech language therapy but who were not in the ORS scheme. The Ministry of Education allocated new funding to provide for training teachers to help them assess speech-language difficulties in students. SES has also introduced a training programme for teachers of Maori (Ministry of Education Update. Getting It Right, Together. Undated).

Results and implications

- Schools were asked whether they thought the level of support/service provided by SLI had improved since SE2000
 - 20% said “yes”
 - 25% said “no”.
- Schools were asked how effective SES, through SLI was in catering for the needs of specific learners. The results indicate that
 - it was very effective for 8% of Maori and 16% of non-Maori
 - effective for 20% of Maori and 33% of non-Maori
 - not very effective for 13% of Maori and 17% of non-Maori.
- Principals were asked what challenges they faced in helping students with speech-language difficulties
 - 42% focused on their dissatisfaction with speech-language services
 - major concerns were accessing SLT services and inadequate provision of service, especially unhelpful professional reports for teachers, lack of helpful follow up and classroom support
 - it is apparent that there needs to be an improvement in the availability of speech-language therapists
 - other major challenges included staff training, finding time to deal with speech-language difficulties and the provision of appropriate oral language programmes to meet the needs of the students.

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- Principals indicated that 13% of year one to three teachers at their schools had received professional development in speech-language assessment.
 - the percentage varied regionally
 - the resource *Communicate to Participate* primarily provides teachers with increased knowledge and skills in assessing students with speech-language difficulties
 - there is a need to provide further professional development and resources in this area.
- There was a lack of communication in the transition from early childhood to school which affected service provision. Some teachers also felt that a lack of intervention by SLTs at the pre-school level compounded problems.
 - 43% of teachers recorded positive attributes in transition from early childhood
 - 57% recorded negative attributes.
- Teachers were asked whether there had been an improvement in the learning outcomes for students with speech-language difficulties.
 - 76% of teachers said there had either been no improvement, did not know if there had been any improvement, gave irrelevant responses or no responses
 - of those who gave a clear “yes” or “no” answer, 40% said there had been improvements and 60% said there had been no improvements.
- Teachers were asked whether they could identify any benefits of early speech-language services in later years.
 - 42% said there were benefits but did not specify them
 - other teachers specified improvement in learning (17%) confidence, independence, self-esteem (12%) and social skills (5%).
- Teacher-aides were asked if they carried out speech-language therapy tasks
 - 54% said they did
 - this is an increase on the Phase One figure of 48% .

- Teacher-aides were also asked about their level of training to carry out SLT tasks. Nearly 60% said that they were not trained to carry out SLT tasks, and 28% said that they were trained (no response 12%). This (28%) represents a slight increase over the 25% reported for Phase One.
- Parents were asked whether they had noticed a difference in their child's speech or language as a result of intervention from the speech-language therapist.
 - the majority of parents (57%) reported that their child's speech-language had improved
 - nearly 43% reported that there was either no change (29%) or a slight deterioration (14%)
 - parents also spoke of the difficulty accessing the SLTs and the unsatisfactory nature of the service.
- Parents wanted clear programmes with guidelines on how to maintain speech-language programmes in the home.
 - they wanted feedback on how they were doing and they requested better communication and co-operation from SLTs and schools.

4

Support Services

Schools' levels of satisfaction with the SE2000 policy and their experiences of accessing support services in different parts of the country continued to be monitored. Baseline data on the range and quality of non-SES support services used by schools to provide for students with special needs were gathered. Baseline data from parents of students with special educational needs on their use of support services, including statutory, voluntary and private were also gathered.

Results and implications

- Between Phase One and Phase Two, schools' overall satisfaction with the quality of support services increased and dissatisfaction level decreased.
 - within the individual high/very high needs initiatives, service quality improved in the SLI and in RTLB provision
 - schools were most satisfied with RTLBs and least satisfied with SBI support services
 - RTLB services were consistently identified by principals, teachers and parents as an important source of support/service outside the local school
 - SLI support service also improved over the two years according to schools.
- The four school case studies detailed in the full report demonstrate that different patterns of support service access and provision are emerging under SE2000 policy. Some of these changes are attributable to
 - the quality of support and service received from SES
 - the availability and quality of alternative providers
 - the possibility of choosing from alternative ORS fundholders
 - the increases in discretionary funding at the school level.
- There is a need to examine in more detail the range, mix and quality of support services provided by SES, the Ministry of Education and other agencies. It may be possible to identify the reasons such as rural isolation, lack of specialist professionals and staff turnover, which may contribute to comparatively low levels of satisfaction in some areas with some providers.
- Although the numbers of accredited ORS fundholders and non-SES managed schools increased in Phase Two, schools reported that SES was their preferred fundholder.
 - the quality of SES support/service reportedly varied across SBI, ORS and SLI
 - schools were least satisfied with support service quality in SBI (18%), as they were in Phase One
 - schools were most satisfied with the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (51%)
 - currently, fundholding is contestable in ORS but not in SBI.

- In Phase Two, schools' satisfaction with individual SES specialist support was consistent with the Phase One reported rankings, with the exception of Early Intervention teachers, where average service quality deteriorated.
 - overall, there was a slight improvement in the mean ratings of these services between Phase One and Phase Two
 - as in Phase One, with the exception of kaitakawaenga, the needs of non-Maori learners were met more effectively by SES personnel than were those of Maori learners in Phase Two.
- Principals were more likely to make positive than negative comments about SES support service quality.
 - the highest satisfaction ratings were reported from the Canterbury region, the lowest from the East Coast.
- Teachers were notably more positive about SES service quality and were three times more likely to make positive than negative comments.
 - satisfaction levels were the highest in Auckland fieldwork data which covered a number of SES area offices and again, lowest in the East Coast
 - the qualitative data for this area (and also Wairarapa) suggested that difficulties in accessing service were commonplace and that rural isolation added to logistic difficulties of providing advice, assessment and therapy services.
- Some investigation is needed of the level, type and mix of support and service provided by fundholder schools to those schools for which they manage funds.
- Parents were generally less satisfied than teachers or principals with SES support service quality but still more likely to make positive than negative comments.
 - the individual support service which was most unsatisfactory for parents was SLT
 - in contrast, principals and teachers were more satisfied than dissatisfied with this service.
- Fewer comments overall were made about the quality of support/service from the Ministry of Education.
 - principals' comments were nearly twice as likely to be positive than negative
 - the highest satisfaction level was reported in the combined Central fieldwork area, the lowest in Canterbury
 - principals and teachers most appreciated having ready access to advice, particularly telephone advice

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- although teachers were more likely to express disapproval of paperwork and information in general, their most positive comments were made about the Ministry of Education guidelines and information booklets specifically produced to support the implementation of SE2000
- among principals and teachers more negative than positive comments were made about ORS application, verification and notification procedures
- over 50% of parents expressed negative comments on support and service quality from the Ministry of Education
- parents most frequently mentioned Ministry of Education updates and flyers, but made no comment on the quality of these
- rather surprisingly, none of the 205 respondents to this question specifically mentioned their regional liaison officer for Special Education 2000.
- Principals, teachers and parents all mentioned a wide range of other agencies covering education, health and social service providers in the public sector.
 - a consistent number of each specifically mentioned the use of private providers for therapy or assessment
 - comparatively large numbers of parents mentioned the major voluntary sector organisations IHC and CCS. They accessed these for a variety of support reasons including after school, holiday and evening care and broader social/educational programmed activities
 - principals, teachers and parents frequently and positively mentioned RTLB support services
 - principals and teachers mentioned the Public Health Nurse consistently and positively
 - they also mentioned the agency currently known as Child Youth and Family, but satisfaction levels were more mixed
 - principals also commonly accessed church based social services and centres, and truancy services
 - a large number of other specialists, clinics and centres referred to by parents and principals in particular came under the umbrella of the Health Funding Authority and, to a lesser degree social services.
- Among the sample of school-nominated parents, satisfaction levels with the quality of support and service provided at the local school were exceptionally high with comparatively few comments on negative support.



PROVISION FOR STUDENTS WITH MODERATE NEEDS

5

The Special Education Grant (SEG)

The Special Education Grant (SEG), developed as part of the Special Education 2000 policy, is an allocation of funding distributed to all state and state integrated schools. Schools received SEG from the beginning of 1997 based on a formula using decile ranking (socio-economic status of the school's community) and total school roll number. The grant was introduced specifically to support learners with moderate special education needs. These were estimated to be 4-6% of the school population (Ministry of Education Update, July 1996). It was argued that schools could most effectively meet the needs of learners with learning and behavioural difficulties, as they could respond quickly and utilise the resources of their own school community. The funds were provided directly to schools because "it is believed that schools and parents/caregivers are best able to make resourcing decisions about their students" (Ministry of Education Update, February 1998).

In Phase One, while the introduction of SEG was viewed positively by schools, concerns were raised about the equity of the formula and the associated distribution of the fund.

Results and implications

- The SEG is used primarily to support learners in literacy and numeracy.
 - new programmes have been introduced into schools with the employment of teacher-aides to support individuals and small groups of students.
- Teacher-aides continue to be used to provide one-to-one support in the classroom.
 - Phase Two results indicate that little restructuring of teacher-aides has occurred in schools
 - there is little conclusive evidence that the slight shift from 9% to 11% of schools who used teacher-aides for larger groups of students is a trend.
- Schools expressed concern that the amount their school received from the SEG did not meet the needs of all students with moderate special needs within their schools, because SEG was being used for students with high needs.
- Schools have developed systems to identify learners with special educational needs, to prioritise the students who require additional assistance and to monitor and evaluate those students.
 - the assessment and evaluation of individual programmes with a particular student's needs were not apparent

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- few schools identified a systematic procedure to evaluate the SEG funded programmes or assessment of the individuals receiving support through SEG
- the use of teacher-aides to track some progress was mentioned by some schools.
- The employment of teacher-aides to support SEG funded programmes is the most common use of SEG.
 - schools use teacher-aides 80% of the time to implement the IEP
 - this necessitates the need for on-going training for both teacher and teacher-aide in integral areas of learning support such as assessment and curriculum modification
 - greater accountability in terms of evaluation of SEG funded programmes would ensure closer monitoring by principals and teachers as to the learning outcomes of the students.
- The decile rank of the school does not impact markedly on a school's use of SEG. Across the decile ranks 1-10
 - schools were using SEG for individual student support or small group support both in primary and secondary schools
 - a greater proportion of secondary schools (70%) than primary schools (47%) believed they attracted students with special needs (i.e., were magnet schools)
 - consistent with Phase One results, schools that were within the high deciles (8-10) believed they were disadvantaged by the SEG formula.
- Many schools believed they were disadvantaged by supporting students with high or very high special educational needs because it was a drain on their SEG while the funding formula did not have a needs based component.
- The results from both phases of the research highlights that for those students not receiving funding through the high initiatives ORS or SBI, SEG is being used as a net to support these high or very high special needs students in school. Therefore not all students with moderate needs are having their needs met through SEG.
- Fifty-six parents were interviewed about how SEG funded programmes supported their child. They identified the importance of child happiness and self-esteem as indicators that SEG learning programmes were making a difference to their child's learning outcomes.

- In 1998 the Ministry of Education suggested that schools work with parents on how SEG should be spent to meet the needs of individuals with moderate to high needs. Results from Phase Two of this evaluation suggest that consultation with parents on the use of SEG is not happening with many schools.
- These results suggests that the SEG funding formula needs revisiting. Schools are currently disadvantaged on the basis of
 - rural location
 - high decile rank
 - inclusive policies which attract special education needs students.
- The results from both phases of the research identify the necessity for a needs based component to the formula. A needs based component would involve linking resources and support to the learner's *specific* education, social or physical needs.

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Sensory impairment and/or physical disability who are not ORS funded

This strand summarises the services and support provided for students with a sensory impairment and/or physical disability who are not eligible for funding under ORS but who nevertheless need the support of specialists.

In 1999 several transition groups were set up to interpret collected data and to plan for a nationally integrated service for students with sensory impairments and students with physical disabilities (Ministry of Education Update, February 1999).

From 2000 students with moderate physical needs have access to occupational therapists and physiotherapists funded by the Ministry of Education.

A national Deaf Education Agency is being developed to provide advice and co-ordination for deaf education and services from 2001 (Ministry of Education Update, November 1999).

For students with visual impairment, current arrangements are to continue in 2000. The establishment of a Vision Education Agency was established in 2000.

Results and implications

- Teachers and parents concurred as to the positive value of early intervention. When liaison is in place and continuity assured, the transition has positive benefits for the child as well as parents and teachers.
- There was some concern about the transition between early childhood settings and school which centred on
 - liaison between settings
 - the exchange of information
 - the lack of continuity of assistance.
- Forty-one primary and six secondary teachers perceived that there had been more negative than positive changes in support for learners since the introduction of SE2000.
- Although provision for students with moderate sensory impairment has not officially changed, at the time of the interview teachers reported reduced support with resources being spread thinly.

- The recent implementation of contracts for students with moderate physical disabilities may address some inequities noted by teachers.
- Teachers expressed frustration with the restrictions of the ORS funding. Schools were asked how many applications were turned down for ORS funding
 - 40% of the applications were unsuccessful
 - 28% of the ORS applications for students with visual impairment were declined
 - 43% for hearing impairment and 43% for physical disability were declined.
- It was recognised that the children in this strand required specialist help but because of the cost or lack of available specialist help, or both, some needs of students were not being met.
- There is a perception that it is harder since the introduction of SE2000 to secure funding for specialist aid for students with moderate special needs.

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Maori issues in English-medium schools

Phase Two of the research examined whether improvements have occurred for Maori learners, what challenges still need to be addressed and what methods are appropriate for addressing them. The situation for students with special needs in Kura Kaupapa Maori will be further investigated in the third phase of the research project.

Questions and methodology

Data gathered in Phase One was taken into account in the formulation of questions for Phase Two: where answers to open-ended Phase One questions had revealed unanticipated practices, this information was incorporated into Phase Two question options.

In Phase One a concern was expressed about the limited number of Maori parents who had been consulted. In Phase Two, 36 parents recommended by schools, who identified as being Maori or part Maori, were interviewed by teacher fieldworkers, as well as ten parents or whanau members who had responded to an advertisement placed by the research team in *Kokiri Paetae*. In reporting the feedback from parents and whanau, information from both sources has been combined.

Results and implications

- The survey data showed that SE2000 initiatives varied in the extent to which they were meeting the specific needs of Maori learners with special needs.
 - the RTLB and SEG initiatives showed considerable improvements in satisfaction levels since Phase One. They were perceived as working reasonably well for Maori
 - other initiatives were viewed less favourably. In descending order of effectiveness and satisfaction they were ORS and Professional Development, followed by Support Services and SLI, followed by sensory impairment and/or physical disability and lastly SBI
 - SBI showed the greatest drop in level of satisfaction since Phase One and was perceived as having limited success with Maori learners.
- A wide range of challenges and factors limiting schools' ability to provide for Maori learners with special needs was reported
 - 8% of teachers interviewed said there were no limiting factors in their schools
 - 45% of survey respondents considered the provision of culturally appropriate programmes to be a minor or non-existent problem

- the qualitative data revealed that only a relatively small number of schools were providing school programmes and services designed to meet the specific needs of Maori learners with special needs.
- Principals were asked if any new programmes and provisions for Maori had been implemented as a result of SE2000.
 - two hundred and forty three principals (85%) reported that no new programmes or provisions had been implemented in their schools
 - 36 (12%) said they had.
- The challenges to providing culturally appropriate services were
 - a lack of funding
 - a shortage of teachers and special education professionals with cultural and reo expertise
 - parental/whanau factors such as poverty, lack of support and involvement in education and low parental expectations
 - as in Phase One, findings across research strands indicate that the provision of culturally appropriate services to Maori children remains a very low priority in many schools.
- The data also revealed that many principals, teachers and teacher-aides held negative and stereotypical attitudes towards Maori. Specifically, data indicated that schools
 - had low teacher expectations and a tendency to ignore the importance of culture in the provision of programmes and services for Maori children,
 - blamed Maori parents for their children's special needs,
 - believed culturally appropriate services need only be provided where there were large numbers of Maori students and
 - considered that distinguishing between Maori and Pakeha students in the provision of services was discriminatory.
- In respect to methods considered culturally appropriate and effective when working with Maori students with special needs, the top ranked strategies were:
 - the inclusion of Maori content in the student's programme
 - the use of small group and one-to-one teaching
 - positive reinforcement and self esteem building activities
 - consultation and involvement of parents and whanau.

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- The school survey showed an increase in the use of these strategies since Phase One. However, the data revealed that the provision of culturally appropriate services to Maori learners with special needs across the strands, remained the least important issue in the SBI and the least effective area in Professional Development and RTLB performance.
- Data collected from parents showed a variety of responses.
 - some parents were very satisfied with the services their children received, the teachers, special education professionals and the cultural content of the programme provided
 - others were very dissatisfied with the service provided or complained that no service was provided at all. They indicated their concerns were discounted and their culture ignored.
- While there have been some improvements for Maori learners with special needs since Phase One, it is clear in Phase Two that more needs to be done. For the situation to improve
 - the importance of culturally appropriate services must be recognised by school personnel and special education professionals
 - negative, stereotypical attitudes towards Maori children and their families need to be overcome and expectations for these children raised
 - professional development can play a pivotal role in changing attitudes and in developing effective, culturally appropriate teaching strategies and programmes, but as the findings from the Professional Development strand indicate, this is unlikely to happen if the cultural component in professional development contracts remains optional.
- The shortage of teachers and special education professionals with cultural and reo expertise is a problem that continues to work against the successful implementation of SE2000 initiatives. Measures to increase the number and availability of personnel with this expertise will ultimately lead to improved outcomes for Maori learners with special needs.
- Gaps in programmes and policies emerged as an area of concern. The gaps identified are directly related to the factors teachers reported as limiting their schools' ability to cater for Maori learners with special needs. These gaps will need to be addressed if the broader issue of closing the gap between Maori and Pakeha achievement is to be achieved.

Professional development

The Ministry of Education contracted a range of Universities, Colleges of Education and Specialist Education Services to provide professional development to schools on a range of special education areas. Twelve regional contracts were established, based from Invercargill to Auckland. Each regional contract was obligated to offer opportunities for Special Education 2000 professional development to at least 80% of the schools in the region. While there were institutional differences, most professional development contracts contained three phases: in-service courses introducing SE2000 policy and an overview of the various strands, school-based courses and policy writing, and optional modules on identified needs (such as behavioural management courses, writing ORS applications).

Since the signing of the 12 initial regional Professional Development Contracts, further money has been allocated for professional development. Contracts have been extended until the end of 2001, with a focus on rural schools, low decile schools, kura kaupapa Maori schools and secondary schools. Phase One reported minimal awareness of professional development by many teachers and principals. Phase Two looked to see if there was a change in attitudes towards the need for professional development in the field of special education.

Results and implications

- Of those teachers who had received professional development, the majority viewed the experience positively. There were little variations between regions both in terms of the number of teachers who responded positively and the ways in which the development had helped them. Positive outcomes include
 - a belief that the professional development has made a positive difference to their general knowledge and information, especially with regard to procedures, processes and availability of help and support
 - development of practical ideas and strategies, identification and assessment of learners and Individual Education Plans.
- For those teachers who responded that professional development had made little or no difference the majority provided no reasons for this.
 - a large number of this group stated that they already had the knowledge and/or experience
 - many said they had already completed courses, papers and qualifications in the area of special education
 - another group stated that the SE2000 courses were not specific or practical enough: teachers required professional development that could be directly applied to the class
 - the courses were too academic.

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- Of concern is the high percentage of no professional development being received for SLI (47%) and SBI (49%) and for culturally appropriate services (55%). This is disappointing given that the professional development contracts had been offered for 18 months by the time of this survey.
- Teachers were asked how the professional development had affected their confidence in meeting the needs of the school.
 - the respondents indicated that they gained knowledge about initiatives such as the ORS and of the support processes that are available
 - the respondents indicated that they felt confident in setting up programmes and procedures within their schools such as assessment and identification procedures.
- In the Auckland, Canterbury and Central regions from 35% to 49% of primary teacher respondents had either not received any professional development, did not reply to the question, or did not answer appropriately. In the Gisborne region the figure was 68%.
- A significant number of parents (55%) believed that they were given enough information regarding things to do with special education for their child. Of those parents who felt that they did not get the information they required, no common threads or trends could be discerned.
 - most parents received the information from their child's school
 - reasons why all parents are not accessing information from this source needs to be investigated and strategies put in place to ensure that this happens
 - support agencies and associations were also seen to be disseminating information to a large group of parents.
- Parents are aware that schools cannot legally deny enrolment to learners on the basis of disability. Of the 239 parent respondents
 - 146 knew the legal obligations of schools
 - 73 were either unsure or did not know
 - a large group also knew that some schools were discouraging parents from enrolling their child with a disability, making enrolment difficult, or denying enrolment altogether
 - twenty six of the 246 primary school principals and nine of the 34 secondary school principals interviewees, indicated that they had denied enrolment at their school to students with a disability.

These findings and those from the principal interviews suggest that a number of principals may either not be aware of their legal obligations or that they nevertheless feel justified in some instances in discouraging parents from enrolling their children with special needs or making it difficult for parents to persist in their choice of school.

Early childhood

The aim in Phase Two was to identify the policies and contextual constraints affecting the implementation of the SE2000 policy in early childhood education.

Phase Two procedures were guided by the findings from Phase One and also by the need to understand more about how the policy interfaced with specific early childhood contexts. Interviews were conducted with representatives of playcentre and kindergarten associations. The interview responses in the full report are reported separately for playcentre and kindergarten associations because of the differences in the organisational structures and philosophies.

Results and implications

- Kindergartens referred to major concerns associated with bulk funding policies.
 - centres are funded on the basis of full time attendance
 - children with special needs may attend a specialised facility as well as the kindergarten, but they might not attend fulltime because of health reasons, and are rarely supported fulltime with ESW hours. In these situations Associations are picking up the costs.
- The interview data indicate there is poor liaison between the early childhood and primary sector. A dislocation between school and entry practices (on 5th birthday) and special education funding practices may affect transition arrangements.
 - one association reported that 5-year-olds were being kept at kindergarten until funding was available at the school [at certain times of the year].
- The interview data suggested that lack of information about SE2000 policies at the early childhood sector may mean that educators are not always accessing services that are available. It is likely that the delays in identification and/or access to services impact upon the effectiveness of provisions in the compulsory sector. The principals' interview data showed that
 - schools were most likely to take responsibility for securing ORS funding - followed by early intervention staff with only a very small proportion of early childhood teachers and parents taking responsibility for submitting applications.
- Respondents in the school survey considered that continuity of support services between early intervention services and school had remained the same although the majority reported that continuity had improved either to a greater or lesser degree.

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- The data suggested that major changes in service provision have not occurred in the early childhood sector.
 - CCS services are now an alternative provider in a few areas
 - these services were commented upon positively.
- Many playcentre and kindergarten associations reported that needs were not being identified and met effectively at early childhood level because of long delays in assessment and provision of service.
 - the continuing gap in availability of SLTs in some areas and the absence of services for severe behavioural cases were consistently noted.
- There is a playcentre association perception that SES in some areas would not support ESW hours because of the higher adult-child ratios in playcentres.
- With the extra funding available, many playcentre and kindergarten associations reported some improvement in SLT services and provision of ESW hours in some areas.
 - in all cases this was qualified by reference to inconsistency across geographical areas of the associations.
- Structural dislocations between health and education funding policies impact negatively on meeting the needs of children and families in some areas.
 - four associations referred to health policy changes which meant that specialised equipment was no longer provided by hospitals.

Residential special schools

The aim of this strand of the research was to monitor and evaluate issues relating to enrolment, provision of services and educational experiences. Seven residential special schools were surveyed.

The methodology for each of the seven schools involved a case study consisting of extensive surveys, interviews and focus groups with principals, teachers, specialist support personnel, residential services staff, parents and students.

Results and implications

Results of the survey not only highlighted the unique nature of each school but also some of the common themes as well.

- The scope of services which were most cited by respondents across all seven residential schools and which were seen to contribute to the long term educational outcomes included
 - consistent 24 hour approach across both residential setting and school
 - availability of specialist staff on site
 - an individualised approach in working with students: more 1:1 support
 - smaller classes and better access to the curriculum
 - interaction with peers with similar needs
 - greater educational support for students and parents
 - greater number of “success” experiences for the students.
- Transition issues faced by the students included
 - challenge of adapting to new routines, structures, rules and boundaries
 - adjustment to separation from home and families
 - reintegration to family on returning home
 - learning to share living space
 - forming new friendships
 - missing old friends
 - transferral of skills learnt at residential school to home and community
 - lack of resources to support students in the community or local schools.
- Perceived differences in student experiences between those in residential schools and those in inclusive settings included
 - the consistency of approach over a 24 hour period with clear boundaries and a more structured setting
 - the move from a negative setting to one with opportunities to experience success
 - the potential to identify with peers with similar needs.

- For parents, the differences included
 - a chance for respite
 - breaking the negative cycle at home
 - getting more support and guidance from residential staff compared with
 - the support received in inclusive settings
 - parental support networks
 - not having to constantly fight for the rights of their child.

Common issues across all seven residential schools brought about by the introduction of Special Education 2000

- There were no significant changes within each residential school in terms of school roll numbers, gender ratios, enrolment for different age groups or ethnic grouping.
- Changes to enrolment and referral processes included
 - shortened tenure and closer connection with the SES BEST teams for McKenzie and Waimakoia schools
 - shortened tenure, increased age of referral and closer connections with RTLBs for referral for Hogben and Salisbury schools
 - ongoing consultation with Ministry of Education with a view to establishing a national vision for Deaf and Vision education for Van Asch, Kelston and Homai Centres.
- Some general comments included
 - confusion as to where the residential special schools fit into the SE2000 policy
 - delays in communication from the Ministry of Education
 - feelings of insecurity regarding future funding and positions
 - concern regarding the verification process for ORS funding
 - accountability issues especially those relating to the quantifying of outcomes
 - a need for schools to network with each other
 - an increase in funding was perceived by some as leading to improved resources and service provision
 - a perception that transition funding had improved
 - there was more awareness and recognition of the services provided by residential schools.

Parent/caregiver issues

This strand looks at partnership between parents and schools. The *Special Education Policy Guidelines* describe partnership as “essential in overcoming barriers to learning”.

The aim of the fieldwork data was to explore working relationships between parents, caregivers and education providers without assuming that participants thought of these relationships as a partnership.

Results and implications

Schools were asked what had been the impact of SE2000 on the partnership between schools and parents, whanau and caregivers.

- Most schools reported that SE2000 had made no difference to the involvement of parents in decision making.
 - in the Phase Two survey there was a slight trend away from schools reporting that there was no change in parental involvement
 - the “increased” trend was most marked in the decision making process of IEPs, followed by behaviour management plans.
- Half of the schools (56%) agree/strongly agree that decisions about allocating funding should be made in consultation with parents.
- When describing their school’s relationship with families
 - half of the schools agree/strongly agree (50%) that SE2000 has had little impact on this relationship
 - a little more than a third disagree/strongly disagree (37%) with this statement
 - more respondents disagree/strongly disagree (42%) than agree/strongly agree (31%) with the statement that *our relationship with families has been enhanced by SE2000*.
- In the fieldwork interviews, half of the parents (104) described positive relationships with their child’s school; and that these relationships had been largely unaffected by the implementation of SE2000.
 - 47 parents said that the relationship had improved
 - the quality of the family’s relationship with a school is affected by how well the family sees the child doing at school or how well the school is seen to be doing by their child.
- Both teachers and parents made suggestions for improving relationships which included enhanced communication and resources.

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- In the questionnaire to schools, most schools (88%) considered that they have a high level of partnership with parents and caregivers.
 - only a small number of respondents in the fieldwork volunteered the term “partners” or “partnership” to describe their relationships with each other.
- A little more than half the schools (59%) in the survey disagree/strongly disagree that some parents expect too much involvement in their child’s programme.
 - it might be that many educators consider their level of partnership with parents to be high enough without considering how well their practices meet the Special Education Policy Guidelines principle of partnership
 - a high level of parental satisfaction with present relationships could result from low parental expectations of what is actually possible by way of partnership
 - the Special Education Policy Guidelines suggest that much more than an invitation to attend or even participation at an IEP meeting is possible by way of partnership.

