Student Perspectives

Years 7 to 10 students in the study highlighted four aspects of effective teaching and learning in the middle years of schooling. They pointed out that these elements are particularly valuable in teacher–student interactions. The students’ views show high levels of agreement with those of the principals and teachers.

The Effective Teacher

Students also often talked about:

• how valuable it was to have (well-managed) opportunities to work collaboratively with others;

• the necessity for clear instructions and a range of examples to help them understand;

• having opportunities to discuss, problem-solve, and participate in decision-making.

Students particularly value in teachers. The students’ views show high levels of agreement with those of the principals and teachers.

Years 7 to 10 students in the study highlighted key aspects of effective teaching and learning in the middle years from their point of view; they also told us what they liked about their teachers and how important it was to them to have a positive relationship with their teacher and how the teacher treated them as an individual.

“Make jokes funny!”

“Let us do the practical, hands-on work!”

“Know whose class it is!”

“Have a good sense of humour.”

We like it when teachers:

• Treat us fairly and consistently;

• Give us work that is challenging;

• Make lessons fun;

• Teach us new things that are relevant to our lives;

• Give us feedback to help our learning;

• Know their stuff;

• Make them
do argument why we should replace it. It was quite cool.”

• At the same time, however, participating students identified a need to further prepare middle years teachers, teacher education, development and support programmes should have a stronger focus on:

- effective behavioural/classroom management;

- the teaching and monitoring of literacy and numeracy, especially for those who teach in specialist subject areas of secondary level and do not generally have the opportunity to develop skills in these areas;

• how to respond to the particular developmental needs within this age group, including teaching and learning strategies that might be most appropriate/effective.

Teacher development and support

According to their feedback, middle years teacher experiences varied widely in their initial teacher education and subsequent beginning teacher induction programmes, similarly wide variation was reported in respect of ongoing professional development.

Despite the wide variation, teachers were generally positive about their initial teacher education and induction programmes and that ongoing professional development opportunities are preparing and supporting them for working with Years 7 to 10 students.

At the same time, however, participating teachers commented that it is better to prepare middle years teachers, teacher education, development and support programmes should have a stronger focus on:

- effective behavioural/classroom management;

- the teaching and monitoring of literacy and numeracy, especially for those who teach in specialist subject areas of secondary level and do not generally have the opportunity to develop skills in these areas;

• how to respond to the particular developmental needs within this age group, including teaching and learning strategies that might be most appropriate/effective.

Other Reports within the Middle Schooling Programme

The study summarised in this brochure is part of a wider Middle Schooling Programme. Two reports that have come out of this programme are outlined briefly below. It is likely that more about other studies/ reports in the programme will appear in the literature. A study of Students’ Experiences from Years 7 to 10 on the衝�瞄_deadline for the contact details given earlier.

Teaching and Learning in Middle Schooling: A Brochure for the Literature

This short report is a summary of a review of literature carried out for the Ministry of Education by Rooms and those of the Australian Council for Educational Research. The key purpose of the review was to provide a critical examination and analysis of the literature, to assess what we know about the impact of teaching and learning during the middle schooling years on student engagement, achievement and attitudes in learning.

www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/middle-schooling-years_Transition-7-10_33825/13

Middle Years Teacher Credentialing in Australia/New Zealand

This study examines the intersection between teacher preparation and registration and the early stage of their careers from the perspectives of a variety of stakeholders throughout New Zealand.


Introduction

This brochure provides an outline of the study Teaching and Learning Needs of Years 7 to 10 Students: A Focus on their Teaching and Learning Needs (Bishop, 2008, Bishop and Bishop, 2010, together with a summary of key findings. The study is part of a wider Middle Schooling Research Programme within the Ministry of Education, which has been developed in collaboration with the New Zealand Association for International and Middle Schooling (NZAIM). The purpose of the programme is to establish a clearer evidence base within New Zealand context around effective education for students in the middle years of schooling (Years 7 to 10).
Background to the Study

This brochure provides an outline of the study. Education of Years 7 to 10 Students: A Focus on Middle Schooling. A research programme for understanding the key learning needs of Year 7 to 10 students and the teaching and learning strategies that best support them. The Ministry of Education designed and achieved this, with the support of the New Zealand Association of Intermediate and Middle Schooling (NZAIMS). The purpose of the programme is to establish a strong evidence base within a New Zealand context around effective education for students in the middle years of schooling (Years 7 to 10). The data further indicated that of all the subject areas covered at Years 7 and 8, teachers were least likely to have undertaken tertiary level study (over 90 percent, and mostly at 200 level or higher), whereas Years 9 and 10 teachers were most likely to have completed tertiary level study (over 90 percent, and mostly at 300 level or higher). The majority of Years 7 to 10 teachers in the study had completed relevant level study (in addition to teaching qualifications); however, Years 7 and 8 teachers were more likely than Years 9 and 10 to have full qualification at least at 200 level or higher. Qualifications held by Years 7 to 10 teachers showed some noticeable variation by subject area. Years 9 and 10 science teachers were most likely to have completed relevant subject-related tertiary study (over 90 percent, and mostly at 200 level or higher), whereas their Years 7 and 8 art and technology colleagues were considerably less likely to have done so (around half, and mostly at a 200 or below level).

Participants, teachers and students indicated a high level of agreement that the highest confidence levels among Years 7 and 10 teachers were expressed in the subject area currently being taught, whilst Years 9 and 10 teachers were more often selected ‘very confident’ response category, whereas Years 7 and 8 teachers were more likely to choose the ‘confident’ response. Students indicated a high level of agreement that teachers do require specialist knowledge, pedagogical skills, and personal attributes to work with Years 7 to 10 students.

The majority of participating Years 7 to 10 teachers identified that the key confidence levels ‘teaching teachers’ of Years 7 to 10 teachers themselves identified as ‘very confident’ or ‘confident’ in relation to teaching middle school students. Years 7 to 10 teachers were more likely than Years 7 to 10 teachers to have full qualification at least at 200 level or higher. Qualifications held by Years 7 to 10 teachers showed some noticeable variation by subject area. Years 9 and 10 science teachers were most likely to have completed relevant subject-related tertiary study (over 90 percent, and mostly at 200 level or higher), whereas their Years 7 and 8 art and technology colleagues were considerably less likely to have done so (around half, and mostly at a 200 or below level).

Years 7 to 10 teachers were most likely to have completed relevant level study in English, social sciences and the arts. However, in terms of qualifications in the particular subject area taken through to Years 7 to 10 teaching, Years 7 to 8 teachers were less likely than Years 7 to 8 teachers to have completed relevant role study in these subjects. Given that principals and teachers typically take a range of subject areas during the school day; the particular subject area taken through to Years 7 to 10 teachers rated themselves as ‘very confident’.

The majority of participating Years 7 to 10 students showed that they receive. It also indicates that the middle years of schooling can be an important intervention stage for ensuring students remain engaged at school and achieve successful outcomes.

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The majority of participating Years 7 to 10 students showed that they receive. It also indicates that the middle years of schooling can be an important intervention stage for ensuring students remain engaged at school and achieve successful outcomes.
Background to the Study

Previous research shows that New Zealand students are generally positive about their school experiences and have moderately high achievement outcomes during the middle schooling years. But at the same time, students’ perceptions of aspects of teaching and learning at school become increasingly negative during the middle schooling years. There is evidence that student attitudes to subjects become less positive. There is also evidence that overall levels of engagement in learning show a decline.

Similar results are evident internationally. For example, U.S. research identifies that students in their middle years of schooling are at particular risk of disengaging from school and of dropping out of school altogether.

The Study

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

- What qualifications do teachers of Years 7 to 10 students in New Zealand currently hold?
- How confident are Years 7 to 10 teachers in relation to teaching various subject areas?
- What relationships exist between teacher confidence and teaching quality?
- Do New Zealand educators consider that the middle years of schooling can be an important intervention stage for ensuring students remain engaged at school and do not drop out of school altogether.
- What teaching strategies and classroom environments do Years 7 to 10 students find effective?
- How well do teacher education and induction programmes prepare Years 7 to 10 teachers to teach this age group?
- Do New Zealand educators consider that the middle years of schooling can be an important intervention stage for ensuring students remain engaged at school and do not drop out of school altogether?
- What teaching strategies and classroom environments do Years 7 to 10 students find effective?
- How well do teacher education and induction programmes prepare Years 7 to 10 teachers to teach this age group?

Gathering the data

Principals and teachers in a representative sample of schools with Years 7 to 10 and/or Years 9 and 10 students were surveyed for their views relating to the research questions. The questionnaire that was mailed out contained a number of rating scales plus open response questions.

A total of 183 principal and 406 teacher questionnaires were completed and returned. Responses were received from participants in 185 schools.

In addition to the survey, small groups of teachers and students in 11 of the participating schools nationwide took part in focus group sessions. The focus group participants also completed written responses in a small number of questions to help give a more in-depth picture of participants’ views overall.

Summary of Key Findings

Teacher qualifications

- The majority of Years 7 to 10 teachers in the study had completed their tertiary level study (in addition to teaching qualification). However, Years 9 and 10 teachers were more likely than Years 7 and 8 teachers to have had study at level 3 or higher.
- Qualifications held by the Years 7 to 10 teachers showed some noticeable variation by subject area. Years 9 and 10 teachers were more likely to have completed subject-related tertiary study, which included, at least 30 percent, and mostly at level 2 or higher, whereas their Years 9 and 10 and all other teachers’ qualifications were less likely to have been done so (around half, and mostly at a 20 or below level).
- Years 7 and 9 teachers were most likely to have completed tertiary level study in English, social sciences and the arts. However, in terms of qualifications in the particular subject areas they were teaching, Years 7 and 10 teachers were less likely than Years 9 and 10 teachers to have completed tertiary level study in these subjects.
- Given that principals and teachers typically teach a range of subject areas during the school day, principals and teachers were generally positive about their teaching middle years students, including their particular developmental needs when teaching middle years students.

Teacher confidence levels

- The majority of participating Years 7 to 10 teachers indicated that they ‘were very confident’ or ‘confident’ in relation to teaching middle years students. However, Years 9 and 10 teachers were more likely than Years 9 and 8 teachers to have been ‘very confident’ in relation to teaching middle years students.
- Teachers’ self-reported confidence levels tended to be higher overall across all subjects, but it is of note that the highest confidence levels among Years 9 and 10 teachers were expressed by those teaching Years 9 and 10 sciences; other languages; science, technology; and the social sciences.
- Teacher confidence varied by teaching year level and subject. Regression analysis indicated that mean scores on teaching, and completing higher levels of tertiary study, in the subject area currently being taught, predicted the strongest positive relationship with teacher confidence levels.

Teacher knowledge, skills and personal attributes

- Participants identified strong classroom management skills and the ability to create a stable classroom environment as important attributes.
- Participating teachers, principals, and students indicated satisfaction with the levels that teachers do require specialist knowledge, pedagogical skills, and personal attributes to teach middle years students.
- Participating teachers, principals, and students particularly emphasized that the newer teachers of middle years students should:
  - have strong classroom management skills and the ability to create a stable classroom environment;
  - set clear expectations for students and apply these with consistency;
  - have strong content knowledge in their field and in good, relevant and sound assessment expertise;
  - have a deeper level understanding of learning and memory; and
  - be expert in the particular subject teaching area and the field of students.

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**Background to the Study**

Previous research shows that New Zealand students are generally positive about their school experiences and have relatively high achievement outcomes during the middle schooling years. But at the same time, students’ perceptions of aspects of teaching and learning at school become increasingly negative during the middle schooling years. There is evidence that student attitudes to subjects become less positive. There is also evidence that their overall levels of engagement in learning show a decline.

Similar results are evident internationally. For example, US research identifies that students in their middle years of schooling are at particular risk of developing ‘burn-out’ and of dropping out of school education.

This evidence raises questions about the match between the learning needs of middle years students and the learning opportunities that they receive. It also indicates that the middle years of schooling can be an important transitional stage for ensuring students remain engaged at school and achieve successful outcomes.

To help gain greater insights about how the goal might be achieved within our New Zealand context, the Ministry of Education designed and undertook an exploratory study to seek the views of principals, teachers and students regarding teaching and learning in Years 7 to 10.

**The Study**

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What qualifications do teachers of Years 7 to 10 students in New Zealand currently hold?
2. How confident are Years 7 to 10 teachers to teach this age group?
3. What relationships exist between teacher confidence and teacher qualifications?
4. What learning show a decline.
5. What qualifications do teachers of Years 7 to 10 require specialised knowledge, pedagogical skills, and personal attributes to work with Years 7 to 10 students.
6. How confident are Years 9 and 10 teachers in relation to teaching middle years students.
7. What factors influence teachers’ confidence in teaching middle years students.
8. What factors influence students’ confidence in learning middle years subjects.

**Gathering the data**

**Teaching confidence levels**

- The majority of participating Years 7 to 10 teachers rated themselves as ‘very confident’ or ‘confident’ in relation to teaching middle years students.
- Years 9 and 10 teachers were more likely than Years 7 and 8 teachers to have taught a number of rating scale items plus open response questions.
- A total of 183 principal and 466 teacher questionnaires were completed and returned. Responses were received from principals in 185 schools.
- In addition to the survey, small groups of teachers and students in 15 of the participating schools nationwide took part in focus group sessions; the focus group participants also contributed written responses to a small number of questions to help give a more in-depth picture of participants’ views overall.

**Summary of Key Findings**

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Background to the Study

Previous research shows that New Zealand students are generally positive about their school experiences and have relatively high achievement outcomes during the middle schooling years. But at the same time, students' perceptions of aspects of teaching and learning at school become increasingly negative during the middle schooling years. There is evidence that student attitudes to subjects become less positive. There is also evidence that student levels of engagement in learning show a decline.

Similar results are evident internationally. For example, research identifies that students in their middle years of schooling are at particular risk of dropping out of school and of dropping out of school altogether.

The Study

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

• What qualifications do teachers of Years 7 to 10 students in New Zealand currently hold?
• How confident are Years 7 to 10 teachers in teaching various subject areas?
• What relationships exist between teacher confidence and teacher qualifications?

Do New Zealand education context consider that Teachers of Years 7 to 10 require specialised knowledge, skills and personal attributes to work with Years 7 to 10 students.

To help gain greater insights about how this schooling can be an important intervention stage for ensuring students remain engaged at school for ensuring students remain engaged at school, a representative Prinicipals and teachers in a representative sample of 300 principal and 406 teachers in 130 schools were surveyed for their views on various aspects of teaching and learning. The data further indicated that of all the subject areas covered at Years 7 and 8, teachers were least likely to have undertaken tertiary level teaching, Years 7 and 8 teachers were less likely than their Years 9 and 10 counterparts to have completed subject-related tertiary study in the subject areas they were least likely teaching. Years 7 and 10 teachers were less likely than their Years 9 and 10 arts and technology teaching, Years 7 and 8 teachers were expressed for those with secondary school qualifications in the arts, science, technology, and the social sciences.

Teacher confidence levels Teacher confidence levels showed some noticeable variation by years students. However, in terms of qualifications in the Years 7 to 10 teachers' self-reported qualifications levels showed some noticeable variation by years students. The highest confidence levels among Years 9 and 10 teachers were expressed for those with secondary school qualifications in the arts, science, technology, and the social sciences. Years 9 and 10 teachers' self-reported qualifications showed some noticeable variation by years students; however, Years 7 and 8 teachers were more often selected 'very confident in relation to teaching middle years students, including individual differences and cultural diversity; ensure that students have opportunities to learn through a variety of approaches and activities, including active, hands-on; as; ensure that students are able to see learning as both relevant and fun, and have the opportunity to work in small groups at least some of the time; respond to students' expressed need for classroom management support; have strong classroom management skills and the ability to create a stable classroom environment; set clear boundaries for students and apply these with consistency; have a deeper level understanding of literacy and numeracy foundational competencies of their particular teaching area and year level of students; be aware of and take into account the particular developmental needs of their students; be responsive to the diversity among middle years students, including individual differences and cultural diversity; gains some level of engagement with Years 7 to 10 students in a representative sample of 300 principal and 406 teachers in 130 schools.
Students also often talked about:

- the necessity for clear instructions and a range of examples to help them understand;
- We like it when teachers:
  - treat us fairly and consistently;
  - give us feedback to help our learning;
  - know their stuff;
  - give us work that is challenging;
  - give us work that is relevant to our learning;
  - know about you to make you want to learn.

According to their feedback, middle years teacher education had a wide variation in its initial teacher education and subsequent beginning teacher education programmes, similarly wide variation was reported in regard of ongoing professional development.

Despite the wide variation, teachers were generally positive about their initial teacher education and induction programmes and about ongoing development professional opportunities in preparing and supporting them for working with Years 7 to 10 students.

At the same time, however, teachers were concerned that if they were to prepare middle years teachers, teacher education, development and support programmes should have a stronger focus on:

- effective behavioural/classroom management;
- the teaching and monitoring of literacy and numeracy (especially for those who teach in specialist subject areas at secondary level) and do not generally have the opportunity to develop skills in these areas;
- how to respond to the particular developmental needs within this age group, including teaching and learning strategies that are most appropriate and effective.

Student Perspectives

Students often talked about:

- how important it is for them to have a positive relationship with their teacher and know that the teacher cares about them as an individual.
  - "He takes the time to research it and you feel he is as well. If pushed you are research driven because if you don't get your research thing it's actually built at the end.
  - "Some of the teachers aren't a lot flexible and being too rigid and we don't generally have the opportunity to develop skills in these areas; and in order to respond to the particular developmental needs within this age group, including teaching and learning strategies that are most appropriate and effective.

Introduction

This brochure provides an outline of the study ‘Education of Year 7 to 10 Students: A Focus on their Teaching and Learning Needs’ – Summary Report. The study is part of a wider Middle Schooling Research Programme within the Ministry of Education, which has been developed with the support of the New Zealand Association of Teacher Preparation and Registration and the Australian Council for Educational Research.

The key purposes of the review was to provide an evidence base within a New Zealand context for effective education for students in the middle years of schooling (Years 7 to 10).
Students also often talked about:

• how valuable it was to have (well-managed) opportunities to work collaboratively with

• the necessity for clear instructions and a range of examples to help them understand;

• We like it when teachers:

- those of the principals and teachers.
- particularly value in teachers. The students’ views show high levels of agreement with

Years 7 to 10 students in the study highlighted key aspects of effective teaching and they kind of take over.”

“Don’t shout at us, because sometimes when teachers are unhappy they are

disruptive and/or disharmonious classroom environment didn’t interfere with their

achievement and attitudes to learning.

Students and Bishop, 2010), together with a summary of key


teachings they have the opportunity to develop skills in

students. This study examines the intersection between

literature, to assess what we know about the

Further Information

This brochure provides an outline of the study

Introduction

The study is part of a wider Middle Schooling

Research Programme within the Ministry of

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The purpose of this programme is to establish a

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