

Education Policy - Children and Young People

Spokesperson: Catherine Delahunty MP

Updated: 20-Nov-2015

Introduction

The Education policy concerns early childhood, primary and secondary education, which plays a vital role in the life-long experience of integrating and understanding learning. For information on tertiary education see our [Tertiary policy](#).

The Green Party recognises that we learn in different ways, by hearing, seeing, feeling, and doing. We also learn from our own life experiences, our relationships with others, and our interaction with the environment and the rich biodiversity of the planet.

We believe that education in its broadest sense is about helping everyone reach their potential so they can fully participate in society. We support an education system that recognises the full potential of all learners, and that ensures all learners get equal opportunities and recognition.

We also believe that collaboration and co-operation between schools, early childhood education centres and kura are essential for a strong education system.

Creating an environment that is conducive to learning must include living in a safe, warm, dry home and in a household with an adequate income so that we can afford healthy food. These factors are as important to enable learning as the education system itself. See our [Safe Food](#), [Income Support](#), [Housing](#), [Children's](#), and [Health](#) policies.

Vision

The Green Party envisions an education system in which we:

- Develop and Te Reo and use the skills and abilities necessary to create a society that is sustainable, co-operative, inclusive and resilient.
- Participate meaningfully in our communities and learn how to maintain democracy in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- Nurture learners' dispositions and skills to enable them to lead lives filled with hope, joy and satisfaction.
- Know the stories of our past and share a sense of national identity grounded in Te Tiriti o Waitangi.
- Learn to solve problems with innovation, creativity and cooperation.

Key Principles

The Green Party supports a high quality and free public education system that:

1. Incorporates Te Tiriti o Waitangi through the education system and all levels of the curriculum.
2. Enables Māori to have control of their education and contribute to the education

- of all New Zealanders.
3. Fosters lifelong learning for all New Zealanders and develops the skills needed to fully participate in society in ways that are sustainable, equitable and peaceful.
 4. Provides choices in education and access to a wide range of education programmes that meet the diverse needs and unique learning styles of individuals, as well as the needs of the whole community.
 5. Encourages people to take responsibility for their own learning and for helping others learn effectively.
 6. Celebrates our multicultural society.
 7. Values teachers as professionals, and understands the importance of schools, early childhood centres and kura to the wellbeing of communities.

Specific Policy Points

1. Expanding Quality Public Education

The Green Party will:

1. Ensure that all state schools are fully funded to a level where high quality educational delivery is not dependant on the collection of fees, private donations, fundraising, nor private investment.
2. Increase the operations grant to reflect the real cost to schools of educating children.
3. Provide a tagged fund per school (outside the operations grant) for co-curricular, LEOTC (Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom) and local extracurricular activities, to ensure that a learner's ability to pay for these does not exclude or restrict any pupils from these educational opportunities and activities.
4. Widen the teaching of practical and social life skills in primary and secondary schools.
5. Oppose any moves towards Public-Private Partnerships in the building and operating of schools.
6. Change the staffing formula to enable an incremental reduction in class sizes over time.
7. Require Education Review Office (ERO) reports to include an assessment of fees and donations, as well as identify what is being done for students with disabilities.
8. Ensure that ERO maintains continuous monitoring of schools so that the supply of resources, including skilled principals and teachers, is in accordance with identified need.
9. Centrally fund all teacher and key support staff salaries.
10. Provide adequately trained staff and resources for recognised learning support programmes in numeracy and literacy.
11. Review the governance structure in Tomorrow's Schools and trial alternative models of school governance amongst volunteer clusters of schools.
12. Encourage the participation of students in school operations and decision-making.

2. Teachers and Teacher Education

The Green Party will:

1. Improve the pay, job status and job security for teachers and support staff so that remuneration reflects the training undertaken, responsibilities of the roles, and supports career pathways.
2. Support pay parity for early childhood, primary and secondary educators, based on qualifications and responsibility.
3. Oppose all moves towards performance pay.
4. Centrally fund a wide-ranging body of quality professional development programmes to teachers that reflect the holistic nature of the curriculum, the pedagogical needs of teachers and which support all learning areas.
5. Relieve the administrative workload of teachers by increasing their non-contact time.
6. Ensure that personal behaviour management, conflict resolution and inclusive education are taught in mandatory papers in all pre-service teacher education and training programmes.
7. Develop competencies for all teachers to teach learners from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Include in this cultural competencies as well as some training in ESOL/ELL pedagogies.
8. Work towards standardising the teacher training programmes across providers and ensure that all teacher training programmes include robust Te Tiriti o Waitangi education.

3. Assessment

The Green Party will:

1. Oppose the publication of league tables which rank schools on academic achievement.
2. Oppose the system of National Standards that was introduced in 2010, and remove the requirement for schools to report against them.
3. Support the continued implementation of the National Curriculum and reinstate the advisory service to advise on its implementation. Give real weight to maintaining a broad curriculum (including into the senior school).
4. Support the continued improvement of the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA), and work with the teaching profession to undergo a review of the current three levels of NCEA assessment.
5. Work with teacher organisations to develop an assessment model or models that allow tracking of student progress against national data; to be used to inform further teaching and learning in partnership with students and their families.

4. Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Māori in Education

The Green Party will:

1. Work with Māori based organisations and representative groups to develop a programme of enhancing rangatiratanga in Māori education at all levels, and provide adequate resources to support this.
2. Develop new and expand current teaching and learning approaches that are effective and keep Māori students engaged in education.
3. Resource the roll out of Te Kotahitanga programme to all secondary schools, and provide resources to ensure the Ka Hikitia programme is provided to all primary schools.
4. Develop high quality kaupapa Māori teacher training and professional development, and provide specific incentives to encourage teachers to train for

and teach in kura, kōhanga reo, full immersion and bilingual schools to meet demand.

5. Develop a campaign to triple Te Reo speaking Māori kaiako (teachers) by 2020, targeting young Te Reo speakers and graduates into student teacher education.
6. Support community based initiatives for Māori language education to allow non school-age learners and those who study at home an opportunity to learn Te Reo Māori.
7. Introduce universal teaching of Te Reo Māori in all public schools and provide the resources necessary to enable this.
8. Work towards tikanga Māori being taught in all schools and available to all learners.
9. Support Māori communities, whānau, hapū and iwi to work with schools so that:
 - a. Children's participation at kura and kōhanga reo is increased.
 - b. Schools develop locally appropriate knowledge of tikanga Māori and teachers are supported to assist in developing cultural competencies in all schools and Early Childhood Services.
9. Increase funding support for Māori-medium kura and wānanga.
10. Build the capacity of the Ministry of Education, ERO and education sector agencies to lift the performance of the education system for Māori students, and improve monitoring, evaluation and measuring of progress towards this goal.
11. Support the comprehensive study of New Zealand history, including Te Tiriti o Waitangi, at all curriculum levels, in order to reduce racism and foster a sense of identity in our communities.

5. Pasifika Education

The Green Party will:

1. Ensure that Pasifika learning is embedded throughout the New Zealand Curriculum, and is developed with the input of communities.
2. Support and strengthen the Pasifika Education Plan and develop a national Pasifika Education Strategy.
3. Increase teacher understandings and skills in culturally responsive pedagogies throughout the education sector.
4. Support a culturally appropriate environment so that extended families can be involved in their children's education, and ensure that families have access to the resources they need to support their children's learning.
5. Provide scholarships for Pacific language teachers at primary and secondary schools.
6. Ensure that government works with Pasifika teachers and leaders to secure the best educational outcomes for Pasifika children.
7. Promote the use, regeneration, and protection of Pasifika and heritage languages in the school environment.
8. Promote research aimed at improving education delivery and outcomes for Pasifika students, their parents, families and communities.

6. Diversity And Equity Of Access

The Green Party will:

1. Oppose charter schools, repeal the enabling legislation around charter schools, and maintain the current flexibility to support/create some state schools designated special character.
2. Support state schools that cater for special interest groups within society, as

long as they maintain high teaching standards, deliver the core curriculum and undergo ERO auditing. All teachers at these schools must be registered.

3. Continue to oppose any voucher systems for schools.
4. Increase the number of teen parent support programmes.
5. Support the retention of rural schools and the concept of neighbourhood primary schools. Review school transport funding to provide better and safer transport services for rural learners, including urban and low decile areas where distance is a barrier.
6. Phase out state funding for independent (or private) schools and reinvest that into quality public education.
7. Support home schooling families and identify ways to improve resources for home-based learners. Ensure the Ministry of Education and ERO understand home schooling education philosophies and practices.
8. Support the Correspondence School and ensure it has the capacity to deliver quality education to its diverse students, including isolated and rural learners.

7. Transitional Education and Career Advice

The Green Party will:

1. Recognise the value of and support quality careers advice in schools.
2. Support the use of work-experience programmes within secondary schools to aid students' transition to the workplace and enable students to learn in communities.
3. Work to facilitate good relationships between schools, local businesses, and tertiary educators to ensure that students are aware of, and able to pursue, a wide range of post-school options.
4. Ensure that transitional programs and school guidance counselling services are adequately funded to ensure the best outcome for students leaving school.

8. Environmental Awareness and Ecological Literacy

The Green Party will:

1. Ensure Ecological Sustainability is specified as a key learning area in, and is embedded across, the New Zealand Curriculum.
2. Expand the ERO Evaluation Indicators for School Reviews reporting to include Ecological Sustainability.
3. Ensure principles of sustainability, including a requirement for sustainability to be taken into account in the building and development of schools, are included in the Education Act.
4. Support partnerships between schools, early childhood centres, home-based educators, community organisations, and local councils, through innovative programmes such as Enviro-schools.
5. Encourage teaching of civics education, including our parliamentary system, the law, human rights, New Zealand's place in the world, and an appreciation of other cultures.
6. Create productive and viable fruit and vegetable gardens at schools, and include the teaching of nutrition, basic cooking, gardening skills, and the origins and production of food within the core curriculum.
7. Set standards and guidelines for healthy food provided in schools.

9. A Positive School Culture

The Green Party will:

1. Ensure that all schools and early childhood services have policies, practices, resources and programmes to create a whole school culture that is inclusive, and supports the identification and elimination of prejudice, racism, bullying, intimidation, and violence.
2. Support the implementation of whole school restorative practices, by funding training, support which may include a time allowance, and leadership in schools.
3. Ensure the use of an independent authority for appeals in the case of enrolment, stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions that can make recommendations to the school and/or the student.
4. Provide a fund for school health/welfare services in a formula designed to meet identified needs within that school setting.
5. Establish a healthy school lunch programme for all schools in New Zealand that has buy-in from parents and has a high level of uptake.

10. Including All Children

The Green Party will:

1. Provide resources to schools and Group Special Education to ensure the government meets its obligations to children with special education needs.
2. Ensure that all students identified as having learning difficulties have access to free or low-cost professional assessment to determine their educational needs, and further ensure these students receive the support necessary to achieve at school.
3. Ensure that blind children, as appropriate, are provided with Braille, low vision, and orientation and mobility instruction, and that deaf children are taught, as appropriate, New Zealand Sign Language and other communication skills and techniques.
4. Support targeted funding for gifted and talented learners and the provision of additional gifted advisers and other professional development initiatives.
5. Allocate the Special Education Grant to schools based on the numbers of children with special education needs they have enrolled, and increase the ORS (Ongoing Resource Scheme) funding for students with the highest needs.
6. Fund new Learning Support Centres for special needs students within mainstream schools.
7. Ensure all schools have adequate provision to meet the educational needs of their ESOL students.
8. Include issues relating to inclusive education in the curriculum so that all students learn how to participate positively in public education.
9. Ensure that New Zealand's obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are met.
10. Ensure school staff are trained in the impact of child abuse, neglect and family violence on children and families, and develop the skills required to respond appropriately to signs of trauma, including behavioural issues.
11. Encourage the growth of support and other groups for LGBTI youth in schools.
12. Encourage more acceptance of accelerated learning in school if accelerated learning is determined to be in the best interests of the child.
13. Identify and address the causes of the gap in school achievement between boys and girls.

11. Schools as the Heart of the Community

The Green Party will:

1. Support the development of schools as community hubs which can include on-site health/welfare and cultural services accessible to local communities.
2. Actively participate in collaborations with other sectors, such as health and social services, in order to promote better outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.
3. Provide incentives including significant additional funding to schools, early childhood centres and kura for collaborative and co-operating ventures.
4. Actively promote examples of successful educational collaborations.
5. Provide resources for facilities and schools that wish to establish themselves as Community Learning Centres.

12. Early Childhood Education

The Green Party will:

1. Re-establish the target of 100% qualified staff in teacher-led Early Childhood Education centres, and reinstate the funding to support this.
2. Improve child:teacher ratios, with a priority for under 2's.
3. Create models to share best-practice and professional development between centres, including reinstating the Centres of Innovation program.
4. Set maximum overall child numbers that no centre can expand beyond.
5. Establish support for networks of not-for-profit Early Childhood Education Centres to increase cooperation between nearby centres.
6. Encourage clustering of Early Childhood Education Centres with nearby Primary Schools to enhance the transition to school, including meetings between Early Childhood and New Entrants teachers.
7. Support a diversity of models for immersion learning in Te Reo Māori and Pacific languages, and resource these appropriately.
8. Ensure funding for 20 hours early Childhood Education accurately reflects the cost to parents and centres.
9. Support quality parent-led Early Childhood Centre models such as Playcentre.