

Election Year Politics, 2005, and the “Nanny State”

HELEN MAY

Abstract:

This article provides an overview of the progress towards implementing the government’s Early Childhood Strategic Plan 2002-2012 in the context of the election politics of 2005. This highlighted social and economic divides in which the so-called “nanny state” offered some differing solutions for the care and education of its youngest children.

The divide between the centre right and centre left politics of the respective National and Labour parties during the 2005 election was starkly expressed in the National Party advertisement:



National offered the electorate an immediate across-the-board tax cut that presumed the shifting of various state responsibilities to individuals and families, whereas Labour offered to shoulder some costs causing stress to some electors. A hotly contested promise to wipe the interest off student loans, thus lifting a burden from students and their families was undoubtedly also costly to tax payers. Early in the campaign the *Dominion Post* editorial headline, “Nanny tax cuts or nanny state” (July 13, 2005) captured the different viewpoints between the left and the right concerning the role of the state. The catch phrase became a metaphor for a range of electioneering positions. The origins of this 2005

“nanny” slogan came, not surprisingly, from the early childhood education sector, itself on a roller coaster of reform, as the ten-year strategic plan *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki* (Ministry of Education, 2002) gathered pace. Election year was an opportunity for the National Party to propose a different pathway. The option for families with preschoolers, and others with various vested interests in the politics and provision of early childhood education, therefore became: whether from 2007, three- and four-year olds in community-based centres should receive 20 hours of free early childhood, as was promised by Labour, or whether National’s alternative of tax rebates on childcare fees for working parents was preferable. Both policies were selective in their coverage.

Columnist Jane Clifton’s article on the “Nanny State” in the July 23, 2005 issue of the *Listener* was sub-headlined, “Politicians mess with motherhood at their peril” (p. 20). She concluded:

In a nutshell, both schemes are probably thoroughly offensive to most parents, but they’ll take the money if they can. In a political campaign climate where every policy round is a push-me-pull-you, parents will be pragmatic and vote for what best suits their circumstances. Will they be socially engineered? Probably not. They’ll be too busy working or learning or job hunting, while also trying to raise their children as well. (p. 21)

Clifton perceived that an overbearing “nanny state” was apparent in both schemes with both parties “want[ing] to encourage us to be different people.”

This article aims to provide some context to these different versions of the nanny state, and to summarise the progress on the Labour-led government’s strategic plan for the sector. The year 2005 was a pivotal one as key reforms relating to qualifications and funding began to take effect. The demand for “free early childhood” first emerged during the development of the strategic plan, but was not included in the Ministry’s 2002 document (May, 2002). In 2004 the idea resurfaced in a surprise budget announcement.

The 2005 election campaign was an opportunity for the National Party to propose a different funding model. It became necessary for Labour to expand the offer of “free early childhood” to private sector centres whose owners had both orchestrated the National Party opposition to the idea and put forward its proposed solution.

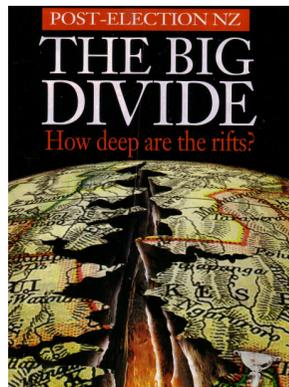


Minister of Finance, Michael Cullen, caricatured as the “nanny state” after the Budget announcement (*Dominion Post*, May 28, 2004)

On May the 27th, Dr Cullen gave to me
 Another budget surplus
 A crust to education
 A boost for health-care spending
 A nod towards the rental
 And a little bit of childcare for free.

Jon Gadsby, *Listener*, June 12, 2004, p. 67.
 To the tune “On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me...a partridge in a pear tree”.

This cover graphic of the *Listener* for October 1, 2005 was headlined “The Big Divide: How deep are the rifts?”; the post-election geographic divides between town and country, left and right, were clearly apparent, and provided a metaphor that was meaningful to the early childhood sector. Bridging the divide across the landscape of early childhood politics were two pathways for the “nanny state” both of which claimed to be *Putting Children First* (Mitchell, 2004; New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2005).



“Starting Strong”

During the latter years of the 20th century there had been an international trend towards more direct government investment in early childhood care and education. In countries with a long tradition of support, such as New Zealand, the focus of state interest shifted beyond the more traditional part-day education experience for preschoolers to include childcare support for working families, and including younger children (May, 2001). Global economic agendas were a backdrop to this interest, and for both “developing” and “developed” countries, government interest in education was framed around more direct expectations of economic outcomes. In the context of early childhood education, increased investment in the sector – intended to improve quality and extend provision – introduced a culture of audit and assurance (Dahlberg, Pence & Moss, 1999). This was expected to deliver measurable learning outcomes across the minutiae of children’s daily activities. The state had in many countries become a “nanny state”, to the extent that children not under its “care” were defined as possibly “at risk”, and levels of participation were to become the measures of successful policy (Beck, 1992; May, 2001).



A significant survey of the increasing government interest in the early years across the world’s richer nations was conducted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development during 1998-2004. The idea for a cross-country OECD review of early childhood came from a ministerial meeting in 1996, “Making Life Long Learning a Reality for All”, that emphasised the importance of the early childhood

foundations for the well-being of nations (OECD, 2004). In 1998, the OECD Thematic Review of Early Childhood Education and Care was launched. The intention was to provide cross-national analysis to improve policy making across OECD member countries. Twelve countries participated in the first review between 1998 and 2000 and another eight countries participated in a second review between 2002-2004. New Zealand chose not to participate, preferring instead to pursue its own solutions, which nonetheless gained international attention. *Starting strong: Early childhood education and care* (OECD, 2001), reported the first review. Key trends noted were the increase in public investment and the move towards universal provision of early childhood education prior to school. A consequent trend was towards a trained profession of early childhood teachers, capable of implementing new curriculum requirements, and regarded as necessary for the provision of quality early childhood programmes. If by the early 2000s, New Zealand had been included in the OECD review, its courage and commitment to the following policies would have been noteworthy:

- integration of care and education;
- enablement of diverse early childhood services; and
- creation of a teacher-led profession.

“Pathways to the Future”

The idea of a strategic plan for the sector emerged in the mid 1990s due to the incomplete implementation of the Labour government’s 1989 *Before Five* reforms (Lange, 1988; See also Dalli, 1994; Mitchell, 1995). A change of government and a philosophical shift towards downsizing the role of government were reasons for less “hands-on” interest in ensuring provision or affordability and monitoring quality. One consequence was a rise in the private childcare sector and a “market forces” approach to provision that sharpened the historic divide between community and private sector interests. In 1992, there were 432 privately owned and 445 community owned services. By 2000, the balance had tipped to 840 privately owned and 538 community owned services (Ministry of Education, 2001).

There also remained divisions in the funding and working conditions for different kinds of early childhood centres. Some private centre owners lobbied for lesser qualifications for staff and had lower rates of pay and conditions for staff than prevailed in the community sector (Mitchell, 2002a). Nevertheless, by the 1990s some crucial groundwork had been laid concerning:

- a unified administrative umbrella for all services under a Ministry of Education that was inclusive of centre and home-based childcare services;
- an integrated holistic “educare” curriculum philosophy (Ministry of Education, 1996; Nuttall, 2003);
- teaching diploma and degree qualifications with the same status as were required for the school sector, and
- the integration from 1994 of teachers in both the kindergarten and childcare sector into a combined industrial union with primary school teachers, the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI) Te Riu Roa (May, 2005).

In 1995, NZEI Te Riu Roa initiated the Early Childhood Education Project to consider a policy strategy that could address the divides between the “haves” and “have nots” across the sector (Wells, 1999). The subsequent report, *Future Directions* (Early Childhood Education Project, 1996), made recommendations towards realising goals of universal funding for children, pay parity for teachers, and a strategic plan for the sector.

In 1999, a Labour-led Government came to power. A strategic plan for early childhood was an election promise (Mitchell, 2002b; Dalli & Te One, 2003), linked to an election policy of “closing the [economic] gaps”. In 2000, the Government appointed a working party to develop a ten-year plan for Early Childhood (Strategic Plan Working Group, 2001). The older goals of quality provision and improved participation were to the fore. This was an acknowledgement that some of the tenets of the *Before Five* policies were flawed and not working equitably for children, the staff, or the early childhood services themselves. There was an acknowledgement that a more supportive government role would be required. A third goal of “promoting collaborative relationships” was harder to grapple with, but recognised the role of early childhood education (beyond the benefits for individual children) in community development.

A strategic plan working group outlined a range of strategies intended to improve the infrastructures of quality participation. There was a new emphasis given to the Articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Treaty of Waitangi and the Principles of *Te Whāriki* (Ministry of Education, 1996) the national early childhood curriculum (Strategic Plan Working Group, 2001).

In 2002, the Prime Minister Helen Clark launched *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki 2002-2012* in which the Government made a commitment to:

- New funding and regulatory systems to support diverse services to achieve quality early childhood education;
- Better government support for community-based early childhood services;
- The introduction of professional registration requirements for all teachers in teacher-led early childhood services, such as those already applying in the school sector and kindergarten. (Ministry of Education, 2002, p. 5).

It was apparent that the strategic plan intended some different pathways for: community versus privately owned centres, and for teacher-led versus parent-led services. The Minister of Education, Trevor Mallard, had earlier made clear his concerns about private centres, outlining the government's "responsibility ... to look at ways in which all children have access to quality early childhood education. Private providers do not have that wider commitment" (Mallard, 2001).

"Blue Skies Thinking"

During the development of the strategic plan the working group placed a new demand onto the political agenda, "for whanau and families to have a universal entitlement to a reasonable amount of free, high quality ECE" (Strategic Plan Working Group, 2001, p. 5). The reaction of the Minister of Education was that this was "blue skies thinking" (Mallard, 2001), and trimming to ensure a more "fiscally responsible" document was urged and undertaken. Unlike the school-aged child, who had long had "a right as a citizen, to a free education of the kind for which he is best fitted and to the fullest extent of his powers" (Fraser, 1939, p. 2), children under the age of five years had no universal entitlement (May, 2004). Policies to increase participation were about improving and encouraging access, rather than realising any citizenry entitlement. The working group, which had members from both private and community groups, did not propose how "free early childhood" could be applied across the sectors. This was to be the task of a proposed funding task force.

There was a growing international discourse on the young child citizen (Sloan Cannella, 1997). Gunilla Dahlberg told a New Zealand audience:

Early childhood institutions ... need to be open to all families with young children. Access should not be constrained either by cost or by admission criteria, for example the employment of parents. To be so, early childhood institutions should be largely or wholly resourced and available as a right to all local children, as such being not only forums but also community institutions. (2000, p. 8)

Linda Mitchell (1999, p. 1) called for "a new debate about childhood" in New Zealand, advocating that, "Early childhood institutions be conceptualised as community institutions playing an important role in fostering a democratic society." She argued that early childhood policy must be framed around children's rights (Mitchell, 2002b). There was advocacy too, from a broad coalition of groups, for a "new agenda for children" as a "priority for policy" (Child Poverty Action Group, 2001, 2003), with particular reference to the right of all children to benefit from the country's resources. A government response was to formulate a new policy Agenda for Children (Ministry for Social Development, 2002). Reconsidering early childhood policy was one part of this.

In the event, the strategic plan *Pathways to the Future: Ngā Huarahi Arataki* (2002) was silent on the issues of "free early childhood" or "universal rights", but a funding taskforce began developing a new funding formula. Instead, the 2004 budget announcement promised the introduction, in 2007, of 20 hours a week free early childhood education for 3-4 year old children in all teacher-led community-based centres. This was to be in addition to existing funding subsidies. The announcement was welcomed with surprise by many within the sector, although it was a more targeted policy than the earlier "demands" for a "child's right to a free education".

The private sector, however, saw this as another attack from the left on their business interests in childcare, and argued against the exclusion of 25,000 children from the promise of free placements. The Early Childhood Council (ECC) orchestrated the opposition. Its spokesperson, Ross Penman, was concerned that private centres would be forced to close, claiming that "Trevor Mallard's socialist fingerprints were all over the plan." Sandy Dodds, a private centre owner from Balclutha in Otago, asked:

Does the Minister plan to buy us out and turn us into community-owned centres so that families can access his funding? Does he plan to provide daily buses to the city for all the families who would like to take advantage of his free funding offer? The plan as it

stands discriminates against our parents by taking away their choice and telling them how and where they should educate their children.

Reported in the *Dominion Post* of May 28, 2004, the Minister acknowledged that the decision to exclude the private sector was "philosophical", but admitted that it was also about "drawing the line somewhere to keep it affordable." He was reported in the *Education Review* of June 2-8 of that year as being concerned at the concentration of unqualified staff in the private sector. A year later it was apparent that the ongoing media coverage of the private sector's dissatisfaction was not conducive to winning a closely fought 2005 election campaign. This caused the Prime Minister Helen Clark to announce the extension of the free early childhood policy to private centres. The ECC was later accused of "putting principles aside" when it welcomed the election turnaround over "free early childhood". "This is not correct", replied Sue Thorne from the ECC, who wrote to the *Listener* (November 12, 2005, p. 6) explaining that:

The government, quite rightly, saw problems with its policy and changed it. Despite the fact that its solution was not our solution, the government deserved praise for doing this.

The ECC had spearheaded the National Party's proposal for tax rebates on childcare fees and has continued to advocate this as a preferred funding model (New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2005).

Costs of a Teacher-Led Profession

The impact of the strategic plan policies were widely felt in 2005, with the introduction of a funding model that differentiated between teacher-led and parent-led services, and the phasing-in of requirements for registered teachers in centres, linked to funding incentives (Ministry of Education, 2005). Since 2002, the government had invested considerable resources towards implementing its teacher-led policy. In key government documents the role of teachers was articulated as crucial in ensuring quality outcomes for children – a position long fought for by professional, academic and union early childhood advocates. In the field, though, there was some resistance to the policy. In some locations qualified teachers were hard to find, but more specifically, there was a legacy of some private childcare owners being reluctant to employ more teachers than the regulations required.

A backdrop to the union interest in the teacher-led funding policy was the possibility of extending pay parity across the teaching sector, already inclusive of kindergarten teachers, to teachers working in childcare. This seemed also to have the backing of the Minister of Education. In 2004, Trevor Mallard called a special Budget briefing for early childhood groups, telling the sector that, "Parity is coming, relativities are lifting ... we are professionalising the early childhood sector." After much applause, the Minister reckoned on an "eighteen month lag between pay for staff with the same qualifications." (NZEI Te Riu Roa, 2004). This was interpreted to mean that the implementation of pay parity could finally be complete in 2008 (Kelly, 2004).

In June 2004, the *Guide to the New Early Childhood Funding System - Implementing Pathways to the Future - Ngā Huarahi Arataki* (Ministry of Education, 2004) was released. The NZEI Te Riu Roa's Consenting Party's Agreement (CPA) for care and education centres was regarded as pivotal: "This additional funding would need to be passed on to teachers in their salaries so that teachers' salaries are at least at the level of the Consenting Parties Agreement" (Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 12).

The CPA Agreement was the first collective award negotiated by the Early Childhood Workers Union (ECWU) in 1984 with a group of mainly community centres. The private childcare sector had, over the years, made strong efforts to undermine the CPA. Its adoption in 2004 by the government as a funding benchmark was an anathema. Ross Penman had been part of a private sector group that in 1982 had taken the ECWU to court to prevent an award being established (May, 2005) and during the 1990s had tirelessly orchestrated a campaign to benchmark early childhood qualifications as less than the current Diploma of Teaching (May, 1996).

In October 2004, the NZEI Te Riu Roa tabled an "historic" pay parity claim for the Consenting Parties' contract negotiation for its member centres. A phased-in settlement using the Minister's earlier reckoning of 2005-2008 was reached ("Phased in settlement", 2004, p. 1). Nancy Bell, the Chief Executive of Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa - New Zealand Childcare Association (TIPOOA-NZCA), who led the employers' negotiating team, stated in a Press Release: "The employers who have agreed to this historic settlement have done so because they care about the quality of early childhood education in Aotearoa" (Bell, 2004).

The *Early Childhood Education Funding Handbook* (Ministry of Education, 2005) provided the specifics of the process and reiterated

earlier documents stating that each centre had to “attest that the registered (ECE) teachers employed are paid **at least at the level** of the Consenting Parties Agreement” (Ch. 3, p. 15; Ch. 8, p. 12). With the Consenting Parties’ settlement in late 2004, a semi-Government sanctioned mechanism to ensure pay parity for teachers across the early childhood sector seemed to be emerging.

The new funding regime was to become effective from April 1, 2005. Seemingly, at the “eleventh hour”, in fact on March 23, 2005, the Ministry of Education released *Circular 2005/5 - Early Childhood Education Funding - Attestation: Registered Teachers’ Salaries*. The Circular again reiterated, in bold, the previous statement about the CPA, and explained:

The key objective of this new funding condition is to ensure that registered teachers employed in care and education services are recognised and required for providing quality. This will further strengthen the early childhood education work-force. (p. 2)

However, for the first time the Circular defined the “required levels” rather than referred readers to the web sites of the Union or the Association to view the CPA. The “requirement” for centres to access the higher level of government funding was deemed to be only the first step of the CPA. This meant that there was no requirement for staff to receive the higher salary levels in the CPA that recognised length of service or level of responsibility. Both the Union and the Association were “dismayed”. The lower level of the “requirement” would allow many centres to receive additional monies without the requirement of paying salaries on a path to pay parity by 2008. This was a Ministerial decision (personal communication, NZEI Te Riu Roa with Kathy Smith, Ministry of Education). There were suggestions that it would ease the administration of the funding and prevent centre closures (particularly in an election year).

In a letter of April 1, 2005 to Trevor Mallard, Nancy Bell complained that the information in the Circular “misrepresents the [CP] agreement” and the result would be “a significant backward step” from pay parity for teachers, and thus “compromising the future ability of the sector to achieve quality.” There was, however, some caution in criticising too heavily a Minister who had shown considerable resolve to implement a teacher-led profession, and to curb profit-making at the expense of children and staff by the private sector. Nevertheless, the dream of Government-sanctioned pay parity appeared to be a political casualty

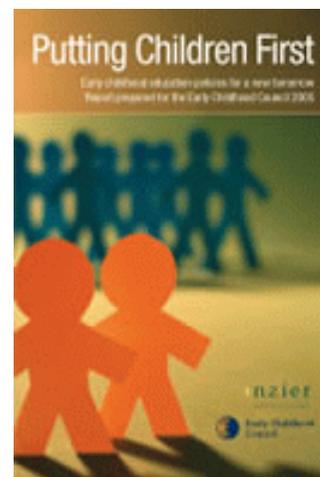
of election year pragmatics. Nancy Bell told Association members that: Markets create winners and losers. We don’t think it’s good enough to leave teachers’ salaries – or the quality of ECE services – to the whims of the market. (2005, p. 1)

At a meeting between the Minister and NZEI Te Riu Roa, and then later in a speech on April 12, at the launch of an early childhood ICT strategy, the Minister attempted to clarify his position. To both groups he confirmed that the higher level of funding available to centres with qualified registered teachers was sufficient to pay the higher CPA, and stated:

[Centres] are also funded on the basis of rewarding experience, as set out in the Consenting Parties Agreement and I expect that *good centres* [emphasis added] will pay at least that rate. (Mallard, 2005)

This clarification of political expectation did not provide a mechanism within the new funding regime to ensure that the full range of the CPA would be passed on to the staff concerned in care and education centres not covered by the CPA. Pay parity across the teaching sector that had seemed so close in 2004 is certainly nearer in 2005, but not fully realised.

“Putting Children First”



If the election campaign highlighted some divides in the role of the state, it was particularly apparent in differing views of the “nanny state’s” responsibilities for rearing the young. Both the left and right of the political spectrum claimed, in the titles of separate early childhood reports, to be “Putting children first” (Mitchell, 2004; New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, 2005). Mitchell saw the interests of young children best served in the government’s responsibility to fund a “well qualified early childhood teaching workforce” (2004, p. 1). She cited the New Zealand and international research

evidence (Smith et al., 2000), and demonstrated the links between research on quality and the government’s “strategic” policies for favouring a teacher-led sector. Conversely, the ECC commissioned the

New Zealand Institute of Economic Research to provide an "independent" analysis of the sector. The key strategies it recommended for "putting children first" were to ensure that, firstly, parents could choose across the spectrum of both private and community early childhood provision. This would require the removal of funding differentials related to ownership. The report authors rejected the free early childhood policy as a benefit for both children and parents. They argued that the best interests of children would be served by a "broader approach to quality" with less emphasis on qualifications and teacher registration, "recognising staff competence and parent opinions." Farquhar summed up the different positions: "Whether it is best for children to deliver assistance directly to their parents or to early childhood services depends on which side of the fence you are standing on" (2005, p. 2).

In the event, the new government in its more "central" position is working to remove its previous policy distinctions between community and private provision, but is continuing to uphold its support for a teacher-led service.

Timing might be coincidental, but it seemed significant that, just as the Labour Party announced the extension of the free early childhood policy to the private sector, Australia's Macquarie Bank announced its decision to "invest in New Zealand early childhood education" ("Macquarie Bank invests ...", 2005) by the purchase of a chain of 20 North Island childcare centres. A bank spokesman denied that the move was influenced by the increased funding for the sector, claiming instead that Macquarie investments in Australia ranged from preschools to a theme park, and it merely saw an "opportunity" in New Zealand's 'fragmented' early childhood education sector" (Quirke, 2005). Long time early childhood activist and NZEI TE Riu Roa national secretary, Lynne Bruce, declared that the "union was appalled the education of young children was being treated as a business where big profits could be made". Conversely, Sue Thorne welcomed the move: "The [childcare] chains add another dimension to ECE in New Zealand and so gives more choice to parents" (Thorne, 2005). Macquarie Bank was not the only business interested in an investment in the sector. The business section of the *Sunday Star Times* of November 20, 2005 featured a large colour article on the expansion of the Kidicorp chain of childcare centres in the New Zealand market. Kidicorp was embarking on a new strategy. Rather than buy up struggling centres, they would instead erect purpose-built centres in strategic sites likely to deliver a profit. The

article gave an overview of the investment opportunities in the "childcare industry", noting the parallels with the "aged care and retirement industry, now on a big growth path." Macquarie Bank had recently purchased the Salvation Army's "eventide" homes for the aged. From Dunedin, centre owner Ann Baraclough wrote to the *Listener* applauding the new directions:

I welcome the political correctness eradicator [National MP] Wayne Mapp. I hope he will talk economic sense to those who believe that New Zealand can still afford amateur, committee-run, "not-for-profit" businesses. (Baraclough, 2005, p. 6)

She claimed no time for "academic-ivory-tower and union gurus who criticise from the sidelines." Baraclough, was undoubtedly referring to the impact of academic research and the advocacy of NZEI Te Riu Roa on the Labour-led government's early childhood policy directions.

Concluding the Year



Day of action, December 8, 2005; kindergarten teachers on strike, Auckland.

A key issue underlying the nanny state divides is that the "free early childhood" policy has not been accompanied by any comprehensive policy to expand the provision of community-based early childhood, nor any clear conception of the future role of the private sector. It was inevitable that government would need to offer some carrot to the private sector towards realising the expectations from parents of "free

early childhood". It was reported in the *Sunday Star Times* (October 23, 2005) that there is a considerable shortfall in provision to address. In Auckland, children wanting to get into a kindergarten will be on a two-year waiting list and only have a few months of attendance before starting school.

One response to the crisis has been the intent by government and kindergarten association employers towards extending the kindergarten day beyond its two sessions within the 9-3 school hours, and to offer an all day "childcare" programme. This would extend the child contact hours for teachers from between 22-26 to 35 hours a week. Moreover, the traditional school term breaks at kindergarten would disappear. At the year's end, kindergarten teachers were on strike after their contract negotiations broke down. Their union NZEI Te Riu Roa has claimed it is not opposed to "diversification" but wants the teachers' hard won conditions of work protected. The issue is also one of parity with the primary school sector. The *Dominion Post* of December 3, 2005 reported one kindergarten teacher who said:

It is incredible that soon after primary school teachers were granted non-contact time, kindergarten teachers are facing increased hours. While they are moving forward we feel like we are being pushed backwards.

The real costs of a "teacher-led" profession as well as "free early childhood" provision were starting to be felt, by both the government and the teachers. The "academic-ivory-tower and union gurus who criticise from the sidelines" have in fact been the key advocates for the realisation of quality early childhood education through a teacher-led profession. This ought not to be compromised by less than pay parity in the private sector, or indeed the undermining of pay parity in the kindergarten sector.

Forward Steps is the Macquarie Bank childcare marketing brand. The way forward on the next strategic phase on *Pathways to the Future* is likely to include the private sector. But the new Minister of Education, Steve Maharey, will need considerable resolve as he charts the way forward to "free early childhood" for all 3-4 year olds. At a meeting with Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa – New Zealand Childcare Association, he outlined his thinking about charting the middle road of the divide:

The minister believes it unreasonable to distinguish between services that invested in providing high quality programmes on the basis of their ownership structure. However he warns "We aren't going to

fund you to make large amounts of money", signalling that the high levels of profit making are not acceptable to this government and could result in policy changes. The Minister wants to see public value from taxpayer dollars invested in early childhood education. "The focus is on what these institutions contribute to the public good ... public value is the uniting factor ... the central philosophy." (Bell, 2005, p. 1)

The policy detail of this "uniting" middle road will be developed during 2006. In February, a settlement was reached, but the issue of operating hours was left unresolved. A working party is to be established and the issue considered during the year.

References

- Baraclough, A. (2005, November 12). Letter to *Listener*.
- Beck, U. (1992). *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*. London: Sage.
- Bell, N. (2004, October 18). NZEI Te Riu Roa Press Release.
- Bell, N. (2005, April). What value teachers? *Itirearea*, 2, p. 1.
- Bell, N. (2005, December). Minister sees "public value" as a touchstone for future policy. *Itirearea*, 6, p. 1.
- Child Poverty Action Group (2001, 2003). *Our children: The priority for policy*. Auckland: Child Poverty Action Group.
- Clifton, J. (2005, July 23). Nanny State. *Listener*, pp. 20-21.
- Dahlberg, G., Pence, A., & Moss, P. (1999). *Beyond quality in early childhood education and care*. London: Falmer Press.
- Dahlberg, G. (2000, July). Early childhood pedagogy in a changing world. In *Proceedings of NZEI Te Riu Roa Early Childhood Millennium Conference, Policy Practice and Politics* (pp. 7-26). Wellington.
- Dalli, C. (1994). Is Cinderella back among the cinders? A review of early childhood education in the early 1990s. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 3, 223-254.
- Dalli, C., & Te One, S. (2003). Early childhood education in 2002: Pathways to the future. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 12, 177-202.
- Early Childhood Education Project. (1996). *Future Directions: Early childhood education in New Zealand. Final report*. Wellington: NZEI Te Riu Roa.

- Farquhar, S. (2005). *Behind the early childhood policies – some thoughts* <www.childforum.com/article_details.asp?REF-NO=7>
- Fraser, P. (1939). *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives (AJHR)*, E1, Wellington: Government Printer.
- Gadsby, J. (2004, June 12). "On May the 27th ...", *Listener*, p. 67.
- Lange, D. (1988). *Before Five: Early childhood care and education in New Zealand*. Wellington: Department of Education.
- Kelly, J. (2004, May 29). *Sally's shoe size still shouldn't shape salaries*. Presentation at annual conference of Te Tari Puna Ora o Aotearoa – New Zealand Childcare Association, Queenstown.
- Macquarie Bank invests in NZ early childhood education. (2005, September). *Subtext*. <www.educationforum.org.nz>
- Mallard, T. (2001, July 10). Minister of Education speech notes, Wellington.
- Mallard, T. (2005, April 12). Speech notes, Wellington.
- May, H. (1996). Training, qualifications and quality: The costs of compromise. In A. B. Smith & N. J. Taylor, *Assessing and Improving Quality in Early Childhood Centres* (pp. 65-72). Dunedin: University of Otago, Children's Issues Centre.
- May, H. (2001). *Politics in the playground: The world of early childhood policy in postwar New Zealand*. Wellington: Bridget Williams Books & New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- May, H. (2002). "Blue skies" talk in the "playground". *Delta*, 54(1 &2), 9-28.
- May, H. (2004). Towards citizenry rights in early childhood. *Delta*, 56(1), 75-91.
- May, H. (2005). *Twenty years of consenting parties: The politics of "working" and "teaching" in childcare 1985-2005*. Wellington: NZEI Te Riu Roa.
- Ministry of Education. (1996). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki matauranga mo nga mokopuna o Aotearoa. Early childhood curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2001). *Education statistics for New Zealand 2001*. Wellington: Ministry of Education, Data Analysis and Management Division.
- Ministry of Education. (2002). *Pathways to the future: Ngā huarahi arataki. A ten year strategic plan for early childhood education*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2004). *Guide to the new early childhood funding system: Implementing – Ngā huarahi arataki – Pathways to the future*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry of Education. (2005). *Early childhood education funding handbook*. Wellington: Learning Media.
- Ministry for Social Development. (2002). *New Zealand's Agenda for Children*. Wellington: Ministry for Social Development.
- Mitchell, L. (1996). Crossroads – Early childhood education in the mid-1990s. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 5, 75-92.
- Mitchell, L. (1999). *A new debate about childhood. Can it make a difference?* Proposal for a PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.
- Mitchell, L. (2002a). *Differences between community owned and privately owned early childhood education and care centres: A review of the evidence*. Occasional Paper, 2002/2. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- Mitchell, L. (2002b). Currents of change: Early childhood education in 2001. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 11, 123-143.
- Mitchell, L. (2004). *Putting children first: A well qualified early childhood teaching workforce*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- New Zealand Institute of Economic Research. (2005). *Putting children first*. Wellington: NZIER.
- Nuttall, J. (2003). *Weaving Te Whāriki: Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum document in theory and practice*. Wellington: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.
- NZEI Te Riu Roa. (2004, May 24). Media release.
- Organisation for European Co-operation and Development. (2001). *Starting strong: Early childhood education and care*. Paris: OECD.
- Organisation for European Co-operation and Development. (2004). *Early childhood education and care – History and context of the reviews*. <www.oecd.org.document 63/0>
- Phased in settlement. (2004, November 8). *Rourou*, p. 1.
- Quirke, M. (2005, September 30). Aussie bank buys Kiwi. *Subtext*. <www.educationforum.org.nz>
- Sloan Cannella, G. (1997). *Deconstructing early childhood education: Social justice and revolution*. New York: Peter Lang.

Smith, A., Grima, M., Gaffney, M., Powell, K., Masse, L., & Barnett, S. (2000). *Strategic research initiative literature review: Early childhood education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Strategic Plan Working Group. (2001). *Consultation document for the development of the strategic plan for early childhood education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.

Thorne, S. (2005, September 30). <www.ecc.org.nz/articles/index.p>

Thorne, S. (2005, November 12). Letter to *Listener*.

Wells, C. (1999). Future Directions: Shaping early childhood education policy for the 21st century – A personal perspective. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, 8, 45-60.

The author

Professor Helen May was appointed as Head of the Faculty of Education at the University of Otago in mid-2005. She was previously the Director of Early Childhood Studies at Victoria University of Wellington.