Editorial

The arrival of a new decade has seen enormous challenge and change with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic that has swept the world and changed not only the lives of many but also the ways in which we think about and enact education across all levels of the system. In this issue, we present six articles, three of which report research undertaken as a direct result of the arrival of Covid-19 in March 2020 in Aotearoa New Zealand and the government response to manage ongoing outbreaks here. Our remaining articles address issues that predate the pandemic, but which are likely to be heightened or exacerbated by the social and economic fallout of sustained and multiple lockdowns and restrictions.

Our first contributors, Gibbons and Tesar, focus on the governance of the early childhood education (ECE) sector during the Covid-19 pandemic using an analysis of government communications via the Early Learning Bulletins. Using Foucauldian concepts of 'normalisation' and 'governance,' their analysis of Bulletin's distributed between August – November 2020 considered the tensions and complexities evident in how the ECE sector has been positioned and governed in the 'new world' ushered in by the pandemic. Three themes emerging from their analysis – participation and learning; health and wellbeing; myths and realities – are explored in order to surface these tensions and complexities and examine shifts in what is considered normal as a result of the pandemic. Six 'normalising' shifts are identified including the powerful message that "the early childhood sector is vital to combatting a pandemic, but that early childhood teachers are not front-line workers" (p. 16). A year on from the period of published Bulletins analysed by Gibbons and Tesar, we are in the midst of the outbreak of the Delta variant in August 2021 and government is challenging the country to achieve 90% vaccination rates for eligible New Zealanders. In this new context, we wonder about the status of early childhood teachers as front-line workers, given the emergence of increased numbers of Covid-19 cases involving young children, including those under the age of five years, and as we move towards a time when early childhood teachers will arguably be the workforce who have the greatest contact with unvaccinated New Zealanders. Will there be a further normalising shift where EC teachers are seen to be the "real" front-line workers?

Yates and Starkey's article continues the focus on the impact of Covid-19, this time from a senior secondary perspective. Their research sought the perspectives and experiences of almost 2000 senior high school students about the affordances and challenges they faced learning from home during lockdowns and their insights into how their experience might shape learning and teaching in the future. Their results are very timely, given the continuing impact of Covid-19 on schools but also given the insights into students' perspectives around online teaching in a digital world and how schooling might be reinvented. Supporting students to be more agentic and adapting both structural features (such as timetabling) and pedagogical approaches to enable greater personalisation of learning are key elements identified. In line with the policy focus of the *New Zealand Annual Review of Education*, Yates and Starkey propose a resilience planning model for schools that highlights issues from across the education system: government policy, school-level structures and governance, professional standards and pedagogical supports, and equity of access. Resilience planning, they argue, is not just needed in times of crisis but also to address changes required in a digital age.

In our third article in this issue, Mitchell examines the impact of Covid-19 using another lens, that of the impact on practice by both ECE employers and teachers, and on the sustainability of ECE services as a result of the lockdowns in 2020. Drawing on data from three projects, Mitchell illustrates the complexities of providing early childhood education services in a pandemic and how organisations, services and teachers engaged with their communities in ways well beyond typical ECE practice. In contrast with the messaging from the Ministry of Education noted in Gibbons and Tesar's article that ECE teachers were not viewed as essential workers, Mitchell's data reveals the essential nature of the ECE sector and its "potential to be a positive force for social cohesion and equity" (p. 47). However, not all practices described by managers surveyed and interviewed by Mitchell were positive, highlighting a number of issues needing attention by policy makers and organisations. In discussing these, Mitchell highlights issues existing prior to, but accentuated by, the pandemic and offers her vision for ECE in a post-Covid world.

The fourth contribution to this issue by Adaspayeva and Parkes offers an opportune examination of the place of global citizenship and global citizenship education (GCEd) within the New Zealand Curriculum (NZC), given the refreshing of the curriculum guidelines taking place from 2021-2025. Their qualitative document analysis of the NZC explores how the guidelines currently support students' cognitive, socio-emotional and behavioural learning in relation to key ideas articulated in the GCEd literature and in the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 that by 2030, "all learners develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that encourage them to be active and responsible citizens of the world to promote sustainable development" (UNESCO, 2015). Adaspayeva and Parkes suggest that there are gaps in the current curriculum, particularly in relation to GCEd concepts and explanations, and call for the inclusion of these in the revised curriculum, particularly given the challenging global times in which we are living.

Santamaria, Cherrington and Shuker's article, our fifth in this issue, draws on data from Santamaria's doctoral study to explore whether and why early childhood education kaiako use touch screen tablets within their settings. A complex mix of reasons across philosophical beliefs, governance policy decisions and resourcing issues all contributed to whether or not kaiako used touch screen tablets with children. A key finding was the absence of a clear distinction between users and non-users; rather between these two positions was a third group of de facto users where devices were not provided by management, typically for reasons of cost, but where individual kaiako (teachers and educators) were able to use their own devices within the programme for assessment and programme delivery purposes. The implications of these practices, alongside evidence from the study that many services have not thought extensively about the place of digital technologies and pedagogies within their practices, are outlined by Santamaria et al. Their consideration of the role of devices such as touch screen tablets during the Covid-19 pandemic is timely, given the multiple experiences of lockdowns in Aotearoa New Zealand since early 2020.

Our final article in this issue is a powerful discussion by Eley and Berryman that examines the historical and ontological foundations of our education system, and their impact both on our views of children, particularly those of Māori heritage, and their experiences within the education system. Their work traces the early development of the New Zealand

education system, influenced by the values and paradigms of the Doctrines of Discovery and Social Darwinism and built on the European factory model, that was enshrined in the 1887 Education Act and which Eley and Berryman argue was a "determined act of colonial oppression through assimilation" (p. 98). They examine the ongoing influence of this approach and the missed opportunities to reframe how we conceptualise education, teaching and learning through a Tiriti-based partnership approach, and offer a model for undertaking such a reframing. *Poutama Pounamu* is a full-year professional learning and development programme that, using Freire's constructs of conscientisation, resistance and transformative praxis, supports teachers to understand the foundations on which our education system has been constructed and the role that they can play in either perpetuating or addressing systemic inequity and racism.

Collectively, the six articles published in this year's review reflect ways in which the education system either contributes to or addresses inequities, underpinned by the twin themes of concern and hope. Inequity is at the heart of several articles, along with broader concerns over the impact of both government policy and local governance. Yet, each article also offers guidance and possibilities for how we might move forward and address these issues, particularly in such disrupted and changing times. We take this opportunity to thank our editorial board members as well as our reviewers for their contributions to the journal, particularly in this most challenging of years.

No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.

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