



Learning for Life Cook Islands Education Master Plan 2008–2023

“All people in the Cook Islands will have equal access to quality learning opportunities across the full spectrum of human endeavour from birth.”

January 2008



Kia Orana

As Minister of Education, it gives me great pleasure to introduce this important step forward, for both government and for those, who are the focus of our “learning for life” efforts – our children. The Education Master Plan captures our forward-looking tools and sets a key foundation to ensure better futures for all our youth, and hence, the well-being of our nation.

Of particular significance is the invigorated approach to Education whereby strategy aims to build real meaning and bring results to target areas of development. It is also encouraging that the Master Plan underpins a long-standing policy of Government, which speaks directly to equal access to opportunity – a policy that has been part of our national outlook for many years.

I welcome the interest of those, who may wish to investigate further the department’s aims and objectives, and invite the additional opportunity to promote the Education Master Plan to the broader community. The sharing of the strategies contained herein will help gain the deeper appreciation that these goals require and enhance our efforts to explore ways in which to build on the results.

Kia Manuia

Hon. Jim Marurai
Minister of Education

The Cook Islands Education Master Plan (EMP) sets the direction in education for the next 15 years. It is grounded in the Education Sector Policy Framework. It forms links with the goals of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP), the Cook Islands Millennium Development Plan and takes cognizance of the recommendations presented in previous Education Sector reviews. In essence, EMP embraces learning for life with a commitment to the provision of quality learning opportunities for all people in the Cook Islands from birth.

The Education Master Plan creates a range of pathways for students and adults to realise their learning journeys. Strength in language, culture and nationhood will enable our people to face the challenges of a world that is forever changing.

This plan recognises the wealth of knowledge, skills and expertise prevalent at both the local and global level and the utmost importance of the need to work collaboratively and collectively in partnerships at various levels. Many of these partnerships have already been strengthened during the development of this plan and I would like to thank all those who have given their time, expertise and input so freely.

The challenge for all those involved in the implementation of this plan will be to listen to each other and the wider community, to be responsive to what they hear and to focus on the outcome for the many learners this plan is designed to support. I wish all involved the knowledge, foresight, patience and perseverance that will be required. I do so with the belief that the implementation of this plan will give all Cook Islanders access to quality education across a range of programmes that fulfil personal interests and provide the knowledge and skills to be successful in their chosen pathway.

Kia Manuia

John J Herrmann
Secretary of Education



Introduction

The Education Master Plan presents a strategic direction for education over the next 15 years. The plan acknowledges that education is not the sole responsibility of any one group. Through collaboration we can make the most of opportunities to develop new ideas and initiatives. These opportunities will provide a foundation for success and excellence for all. The plan describes what we are aiming for and how we intend to get there.

Recent reviews of education have identified where the education system needs to build on existing initiatives and deliver further results. These reviews have provided us with four areas on which to focus our strategy.

These are:

- Taku Ipukarea Kia Rangatira
- Learning and Teaching
- Learning and the Community
- Infrastructure and Support

Taku Ipukarea Kia Rangatira is intended to strengthen a learner's identity as a Cook Islander. It is grounded in the language, culture, thinking, visions and aspirations of the people and has a sense of belonging and pride. It is for a future that is vibrant and fulfilling.

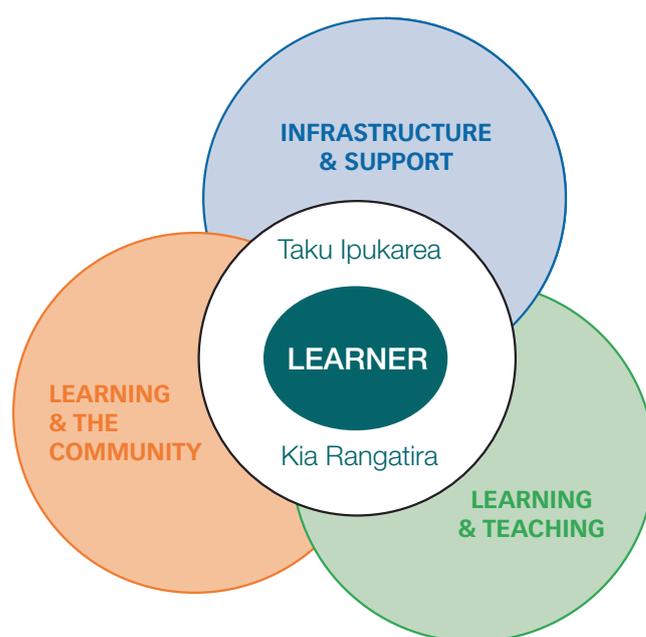
This strength in Cook Islands identity is not at the expense of any other area of our lives. *Learning and Teaching* and *Learning and the Community* in particular create opportunities for success across a range of contexts for learners.

These opportunities promote the enjoyment of quality learning and encourage learners to continue an active involvement in education through out their lives. The goals of *Infrastructure and Support* relate to managing the systems that support education and promote quality.

The **strategic vision** for Education is:

...to build the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of Cook Islanders to put their capabilities to best use in all areas of their lives.

Seven principles have guided the development of this plan. They are Efficiency, Equity, Excellence, Partnerships, Quality, Relevancy and Sustainability. The purpose of these principles is to support the overall outcome of improved educational achievement for all Cook Islanders.





Taku Ipukarea Kia Rangatira



Focus: Involves strength in Maori language, culture, perspectives and aspirations and will provide a firm foundation for engagement with the wider world.

Goals:

- Improved Maori literacy at all levels of education
- Relevant learning and teaching styles and methods identified and developed
- Develop as a centre of excellence for all things Cook Islands



The key aims for this focus area relate to:

- Ensuring success for learners through 90% of all learners reading at their chronological age at the end of Year 8
- Raising adult literacy by providing adult Maori literacy courses
- Increasing access of Cook Islanders to regional and international education programmes
- Improving achievement by implementing relevant learning and teaching styles and methods
- Attracting Cook Islanders and other interested students to study in the Cook Islands
- Providing the private sector with future employees with a strength of identity and desire for excellence

These goals and aims will be achieved by developing and implementing action plans that:

- Identify the best approaches to learning and teaching for all learners in the Cook Islands
- Develop and produce resources across all essential learning areas in Maori
- Maximise the role of Cook Islanders as regional and as global citizens through high level participation in international programmes
- Provide skilled teachers, quality resources and relevant courses at all levels of learning
- Provide opportunities for every island to be actively involved in learning programmes on language and culture
- Create programmes that attract people to study in the Cook Islands.

Learning and Teaching

Focus: Equitable access to quality learning and the experience of success through a range of programmes that meet individual needs and celebrate individual talents.

Goals:

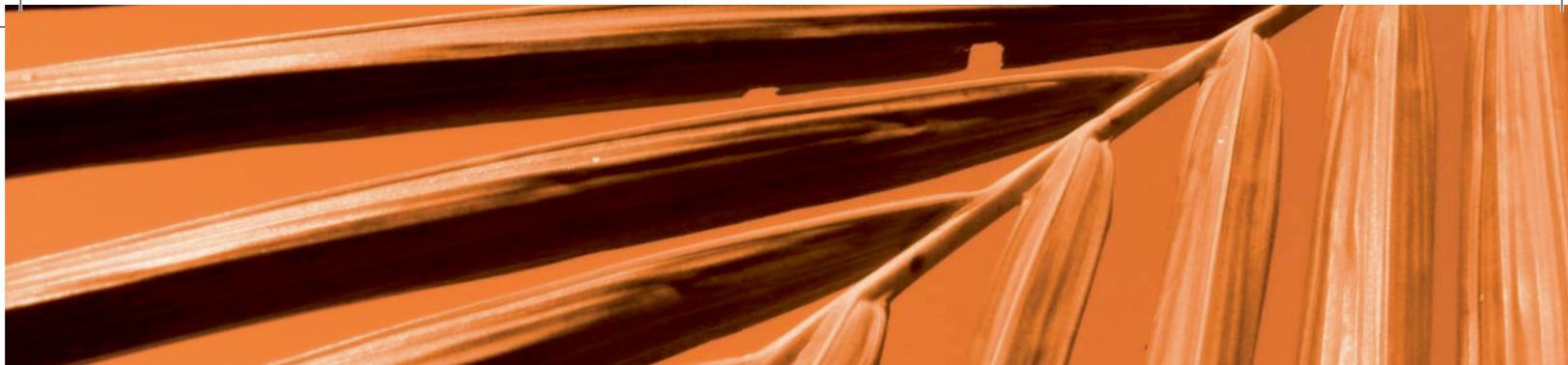
- Equitable access for all learners to quality learning programmes.
- Improved literacy and numeracy outcomes for all learners
- Increased enrolment in ECE Centres
- Increased access to vocational courses at senior levels
- Systems that enhance student wellbeing
- Significantly increased participation in tertiary education
- Increased numbers of accredited institutions and courses available in-country

The key aims for this focus area relate to:

- Ensuring 90% of all learners are reading at their chronological age at the end of Year 8 in both English and Cook Islands Maori and using strategies at Level 7 of the numeracy framework
- Achieving a 100% attendance rate for all children eligible to attend an ECE centre
- Providing 100% access for all learners to responsive pastoral care, careers and guidance support
- Providing 100% access for all learners to programmes that meet their individual needs
- Ensuring 75% of students entering NCEA L1 for the first time at year 11 will achieve the qualification
- Achieving 90% student retention beyond the minimum leaving age either in formal schooling or another recognized course of learning
- Providing 100% access for all senior students to transition programmes
- Providing re-entry programmes on all islands for people who have been away from learning
- Developing delivery mechanisms from Rarotonga to outer islands for all courses
- Ensuring at least 60% of school leavers are participating in some form of tertiary education
- Engaging at least 25% of the adult population in tertiary training
- Developing an accredited Cook Islands institute with a wide scope of NQF standards
- Providing access to other accredited industry specific programmes eg London City and Guilds

These goals and aims will be achieved by developing and implementing action plans that:

- Enhance the quality of programme delivery and teaching approaches
- Develop strategies that meet the professional needs of teachers in the northern group and other isolated practitioners
- Strengthen ECE centres to offer high quality play based learning environments for children
- Produce appropriate culturally sensitive and gender inclusive / balanced resources
- Support inclusive education environments
- Develop strategies for distance education, isolated students, second chance learning and adult education
- Ensure that all learners are supported in making decisions about further learning opportunities and career pathways
- Develop pastoral care and guidance systems
- Ensure high level compliance with professional standards
- Developing technical and vocational programmes including life skills programmes
- Develop, implement and resource an active tertiary sector within the Cook Islands.



Learning and the Community



Focus: A high level of community involvement in determining quality educational outcomes

Goals:

- Increased participation by parents in education policy and decision making
- Wide community support and understanding of inclusive education
- Increased participation of the wider community in ongoing learning



The key aims for this focus area relate to:

- Establishing well equipped and resourced community learning centre on each island
- Actively involving parents in the early learning of their children
- Hosting at least three national programmes per year eg symposiums, debates
- Early intervention diagnostic programmes for young children
- Establishing and supporting a Healthy Schools strategy



These goals and aims will be achieved by developing and implementing action plans that:

- Establish and resource Community Education centres and programmes
- Engage parents and extended families in the education of children, especially in the early years
- Develop strategies to support inclusive education, early intervention and transitional programmes
- Develop and implement strategies for Healthy Schools programmes.

Infrastructure and Support

Focus: The provision of appropriate legislation, research, guidelines and standards which support and enhance opportunities for learning.

Goals:

- Adequate budget resource for education
- High quality buildings, grounds and facilities
- Well qualified and resourced teachers, administrators and support staff
- High quality management systems

The key aims for this focus area relate to:

- Establishing fully resourced schools to meet the teaching and learning needs of all students
- Reviewing the Education Act to enable it to meet present and future education needs
- Up-skilling and resourcing of management (administrators, teachers, parents) to meet changes in education
- Ensuring 100% of all educational professionals meet the professional standards of their teaching level eg ECE, secondary with support mechanisms for advice, guidance and supervision where required

These goals and aims will be achieved by developing and implementing action plans that:

- Review, upgrade or replacement of the Cook Islands Education Act
- Develop a number of strategies on training, recruitment, evaluation, remuneration and retention of teachers
- Develop a cooperative approach with other ministries, providers, agencies and non-government organisations
- Ensure high quality and good governance
- Utilise audit processes to ensure quality, compliance and strategies for improvement
- Provide training and development opportunities for parents to expand their governance role at all levels of education
- Ensure disability access to all education buildings
- Provide for the establishment and resourcing of specialist areas eg ICT, Performing Arts
- Provide learning centres with support in financial, administration and other matters.



As a result of this plan

Children in the Cook Islands will be able to:

- Participate in programmes that provide them with experiences of success
- Identify opportunities for own personal and career development
- Enjoy learning environments that are comfortable, supported and assist them to achieve their goals
- Function as highly literate and numerate members of society
- Take advantage of opportunities locally, regionally and globally to further their development

Adults in the Cook Islands will be able to:

- Access opportunities for second chance learning to achieve qualifications, skills and training
- Access a wide range of courses to equip them for the career and lifestyle of their choice
- Access all levels of education through community education centres

Parents in the Cook Islands will be able to:

- Actively participate in their child's learning from birth
- Participate in all decision making processes for their child's schooling
- Enjoy confidence in the quality of their child's education

Businesses in the Cook Islands will be able to:

- Draw on a pool of educated employees
- Provide career pathways
- Value increased productivity of its workforce
- Create opportunity for new industries

The Cook Islands will be able to:

- Fulfil its obligations to its people and the region
- Project a dynamic, prosperous and stable society.

