

Large pay bump for early childhood teachers in pre-budget announcement ^[1]

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EXCERPTS

Up to 17,000 early childhood teachers are set to receive a substantial pay bump as part of a \$320m package announced by the Government today.

The \$151m pay bump will bring qualified early childhood teachers who aren't teaching in kindergartens minimum salary up to \$49,862 on July 1, up from \$45,491 or \$46,832.

This brings their pay more into line with kindergarten teachers.

Education Minister Chris Hipkins made the announcement ahead of the Budget on Thursday, which is expected to mostly focus on the Covid-19 recovery.

It follows a long battle by early childhood education (ECE) teachers for equity between kindergarten and non-kindergarten teachers, something Hipkins said the Government would fix.

"As we respond to the impact of COVID-19 to our society and economy, the Government remains committed to fair pay for lower-paid workers, especially the workers who have helped get the country moving again," Hipkins said.

"This funding boost goes some way towards levelling the playing field for ECE centres looking to employ qualified teachers but I do acknowledge that fully closing the gap between education and care services and kindergartens will be a challenge to be addressed over a number of Budgets."

Alongside the pay bump is a \$36.2 million of funding over four years for home-based early learning initiatives, intended to lift the quality of the sector.

"Home-based early childhood education has been the fastest growing part of the early learning sector. In the future at least 80% of the home-based educator workforce will hold a required qualification, to ensure better and more consistent quality," Chris Hipkins said.

A relatively small \$3.1m will go to the country's 400 playcentres.

Hipkins said the total amount going to early learning in Thursday's Budget would be \$320m.

He announced an early childhood action plan in December of last year, acknowledging that other sectors of education had received more help from the Government in its first two years.

Virginia Oakly, ECE representative for Teachers' Union NZEI, welcomed the news as a serious win.

"This is fantastic news. We welcome this as a great first step towards pay parity for early childhood teachers following a decade of neglect by the previous government," says Oakly said.

"Today's announcement means there is now the same minimum rate of base pay for qualified teachers right across the sector."

"Teachers are playing a critical role in supporting tamariki through the current crisis. The Government's commitment to fair pay for lower-paid workers throughout their Covid-19 response should be applauded," she says.

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[3]

Tags: wages ^[4]

workforce ^[5]

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/20/05/large-pay-bump-early-childhood-teachers-pre-budget-announcement> [2] <https://tinyurl.com/y9zygbx9> [3] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/region/australia-and-new-zealand> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/wages> [5] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/workforce>