

Strengthening Learning Support | FAQs

Thank you to everyone who has contacted the Ministry of Education to ask us questions around the Budget '25 investment in Learning Support.

Based on some of the common themes we have received, here's some frequently asked questions.

There is also some helpful information including a fact sheet, road map, and brochure on our website.

Helpful links:

- [Learning Support Budget 25 - education.govt.nz \(external link\)](#)
- [Budget roadmap \(external link\)](#)
- [Budget information brochure \(external link\)](#)
- [Learning support factsheet - Ministry of Education \(external link\)](#)

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Learning Support Coordinators

When will individual schools get a Learning Support Coordinator (LSC)?

To give school communities the most accurate allocation for their LSC roles, the Ministry of Education will work through LSC allocations using the most up-to-date data from the July 2025 roll returns.

The Ministry plans to publish which schools will be receiving Learning Support Coordinator roles, when, and how the roles were allocated, as soon as practicable following that.

Those with current allocations (within the cluster model) have no proposed change/increase in LSC FTTE in this Budget announcement but we are planning to transition to an enhanced model over time. Existing LSCs will continue to be employed in full-time roles operating across primary and secondary schools in a cluster until at least January 2027. It is the Ministry's intention to have all LSCs working across the new model by 2028.

Some LSCs currently operate across clusters, so how will they transition to the new model?

Existing LSCs will continue to be employed in full-time roles operating across primary and secondary schools in a cluster until at least January 2027.

The investment provides all state and state integrated schools and kura with Year 1 to 8 students access to a Learning Support Coordinator (around 650 additional FTTE), enabling improved identification of, and response to learner needs.

The Ministry of Education has a dedicated team working on the design and delivery of the LSC rollout, who will engage with the sector and Ministry regional staff around the implementation.

Why has there been a shift to allocating LSCs directly to schools?

Schools with a full-time LSC on site report the greatest benefit and satisfaction with the role. Evaluation of the tranche 1 LSC rollout found that the role is highly valued and has improved schools' ability to identify and respond to learning support needs. However, the effectiveness of LSCs at operating and collaborating across clusters of schools has been variable. LSCs operating across multiple schools, particularly in rural areas, can lose a significant amount of their time to travel.

This initiative will bring learning support expertise closer to schools and learners and give schools increased autonomy over who they employ to meet their individual needs.

Do secondary schools lose an LSC allocation school based on the changes to Kāhui Ako funding?

Many schools who received Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) in the 2020 allocation were also in Kāhui Ako, however the LSC FTTE was allocated separately to other Kāhui Ako resourcing.

Schools did not receive LSC FTTE because they were part of a Kāhui Ako, but because they were schools who were already working in a cluster approach to meet learning support needs in the educational community.

How does the number of students at a school relate to the LSC allocation?

The 1:500 allocation ratio means that schools with less than 450 students (~930 schools) will receive less than 1 FTTE, so they will be funded for a part-time appointment (at least 0.2 FTTE). Teachers could be employed by a school to spend part

of their time performing the LSC role, and part of their time on classroom teaching or other management duties, or the LSC role could be a part-time position.

What training will be provided for teachers who are becoming LSCs?

Budget '25 investment provides approximately \$14 million for professional learning and development opportunities for current and new LSCs.

When will the updated LSC role description come out?

The role description will be available later this year, in time to support the first schools in this rollout to appoint for Term 1, 2026.

The Ministry of Education has a dedicated team working on the design and delivery of the LSC rollout, who will engage with the sector and Ministry regional staff around the implementation.

How will schools be supported around recruitment of new LSCs for 2026?

The Ministry of Education will provide schools boards and leaders with information to support the recruitment to LSC roles. We'll be communicating more details around the implementation of these roles in the coming weeks.

We continue to support schools with existing LSCs operating across primary and secondary schools in a cluster as we work towards a consistent model.

How will Māori Medium and Kura Kaupapa Māori settings be funded?

As part of the rollout of Learning Support Coordinators to all schools and kura, rumaki reo Māori immersion Level 1 and 2 roles are included in the staffing calculations for 2026, pending the design of a learning support coordination function for rumaki reo. The Ministry is working with Ngā Kura ā Iwi and Te Rūnanga Nui to develop a learning support coordination function for their affiliated kura. Engagement with kura motuhake is expected to begin by Term 3 this year.

Will Years 7-13 Secondary Schools get an LSC?

All state and state integrated schools with students in Years 1-8 will be eligible to receive new LSC staffing entitlement funded through Budget 2025. Funding will be allocated based on student enrolments, meaning that schools with learners outside of Years 1-8, will receive an LSC allocation based the number of learners in this cohort.

What about Charter Schools, Te Kura and Specialist Schools?

All new charter schools with Year 1-8 students, and all converting charter schools with Year 1-8 students that were not part of LSC clusters, receive an increase to their staffing-based funding that is equivalent to the new LSC staffing component for state schools. Any converted charter schools that previously employed an LSC, will continue to receive resourcing to do so until the wider transition arrangements have been applied.

Te Kura will be provided with additional funding for learning support coordination. The amount provided will be calculated using their full-time Year 1-8 Equivalent Full-Time Student roll.

At this time, specialist schools are not included in this initiative, as students enrolled in specialist provision already have their learning support needs identified, addressed and funded.

Expansion of Early Learning Services

What is meant by the extension of the Early Learning Intervention Service (EIS) until the end of Year 1?

The EIS is the main tailored Ministry support available to children, whānau and teachers in early learning and home settings. It provides transdisciplinary support made up of a range of specialists providing support for young children with a range of needs including disability, communication, behaviour and wellbeing.

The extension of the EIS through until the end of Year 1 of schooling will mean children and whānau will receive supported transitions and have the tailored supports in place for when they start school. Children and whānau will be supported by the same group of specialists that supported them prior to school entry. It will provide consistency for children and whānau and enable smoother and more efficient transitions into school.

What will happen to the learning supports currently offered in Year 1 when the Early Intervention Service is expanded?

The extension of the EIS into Year 1 of schooling means some services that currently offer these services will have the entry age adjusted while others will remain in place. To maintain the specialist support that is delivered to learners with the highest needs the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS), Te Kahu Tōi Intensive Wraparound Service (IWS), and the School High Health Needs Fund will continue to be available in Year 1 alongside the EIS.

Due to specialist staff in EIS becoming available in Year 1, that provide similar supports to Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), the RTLB service will begin working with learners during the transition period from Year 1 to 2, instead of at the beginning of Year 1. Where schools do not have access to a Learning Support Coordinator (LSC) the SENCO will provide transition support until the school has access to an LSC.

To improve transitions into school and kura, Learning Support Coordinators (LSCs) will work collaboratively with early intervention specialist staff for learners in Year 1. Services delivered by the Communication and Behaviour Services will be provided by the EIS from 2026. To remove duplication from the system from 2026, Communication and Behaviour Services will be available to learners from Year 2. There will be guidance around this to come.

What schools will have access to the Early Intervention Service for their Year 1 students?

All schools, kura, early learning services, kōhanga reo and puna reo will have access to EIS for their children with additional needs from birth through to the end of Year 1 of school.

What impact does the expansion of the Early Intervention Service into Year 1 have on staff currently working in this service?

Specialist staff will continue to provide learners with additional needs the support required to access the curriculum and learn alongside their peers. There will be minimal impact on specialist staff working with learners in Year 1. Learning support specialist staff work with a practice model where they provide supports to a range of learners across the multiple Ministry-delivered services, including the EIS, Communication Service, Behaviour Service, Te Kahu Tōi and the Ongoing Resourcing Scheme.

How will workforce constraints around recruiting and retaining learning support specialists be taken into account?

Alongside the work to support the Budget investments, we have developed a draft Workforce Action Plan that recognises and works to mitigate the increased demand for learning support specialists. The Workforce Action Plan has a focus on the workforce implications of strengthening and expanding the Early Intervention Service but will also support the other initiatives within the Budget package.

The Plan is made up of five action areas:

1. Recruit more learning support specialists
2. Strengthen the domestic supply pipeline for learning support specialists
3. Develop a supply pipeline of learning support specialists for Kaupapa Māori and Māori Medium settings
4. Shift to a strategic workforce management approach across workforces, sectors, and systems to increase capacity and strengthen the learning support system
5. Equip the specialist learning support workforce with guidance, support, and tools

We are finalising the Workforce Action Plan and beginning to action it. This will support the implementation of the Learning Support Budget Package in 2026.

How will RTLB, EIS and LSC work together with the extension of EIS into year 1?

Due to specialist EIS staff becoming available in Year 1 that provide similar supports to Resource Teachers Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), the RTLB service will begin working with learners during the transition period from Year 1 to 2, instead of at the beginning of Year 1. LSCs will work with the EIS and RTLBs to support transition points for learners. Standardised operating procedures will be developed to clearly outline how learning support roles work together for the benefit of mokopuna and ākonga and to minimise duplication.

Will training be provided for staff in the Early Intervention Service who haven't worked in primary schools before e.g. on the New Zealand Curriculum?

Yes, professional learning and development opportunities will be provided to all staff, existing and new, to support a nationally consistency EIS that works to identify the needs of learners earlier and provide timely, efficient and effective support. This will include upskilling Early Intervention Teachers who have already completed their training to have the skills and capabilities to work with learners in Year 1.

Will early learning settings lose resource to schooling through this initiative?

No, this initiative includes funding to increase the number of specialists needed to support learners in Year 1 of schooling. It also includes funding for over 500 additional learning support specialists to support children before they enter school.

How many new EIS staff are proposed in the budget?

The EIS component to Budget '25 provides funding for an additional 192 Early Intervention Teachers, 10 FTE Educational Psychologist Interns and 17 Service

Managers, in 2026. Have a look at the Strengthening Learning Support [Road Map](#) for more information around investment from 2027-2030 and beyond.

Is there going to be Teacher Aide support for EIS in year 1?

By 2028/29, this initiative will be funding approximately 900,000 additional hours of teacher aide time per year.

The Ministry of Education has a dedicated team working on the implementation of this work, who will engage with the sector and Ministry regional staff around the implementation.

What about funding for Teacher Aides in secondary schools?

The focus of this Budget is on establishing strong learning support foundations in the early years, which evidence shows will have the most impact in the long term.

Are there any changes to the role of Teacher Aides?

Teacher aides have a range of responsibilities. This initiative isn't changing the role of teacher aides specifically, but by integrating this support with the extension of the EIS into year 1, this is an opportunity to align teacher aide practice with best practice evidence. This includes more general classroom support to free up the teacher to spend more time with learners who require additional support, working alongside specialists and Learning Support Coordinators within the classroom environment.

Will parents be able to access the Early Intervention Service in Year 1 even if they have not attended early learning?

Yes, the Early Intervention Service will be available to children from birth to the end of Year 1 of schooling, including those in home and education settings.

Contact us

If you have any questions or engagement opportunities, email:

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