

Expansion of Early Intervention Services (EIS)

Information for Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour (RTLB)



The Early Intervention Service (EIS) is a learning support service for children with additional developmental, communication or behavioural needs.

From Term 1 2026, EIS is expanding to support children from birth through to the end of Year 1 of school.

Working with children and their families

Early intervention teams work with families, early learning services, schools and kura who ask for support when they are concerned about a child's learning and development.

The expansion of this service through to the end of Year 1 of school means that children and whānau will be **supported from early learning settings to school**.

What this means for RTLB Practitioners

Schools are now able to make referrals to Early Intervention Services for learners in Years 0 to 1.

If a child requires learning support beyond Year 1, they may be supported by Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), or Behaviour and Communications Services.

The school's learning support coordinator (LSC) or SENCO (Special Education Needs Coordinator) may also play a central role in facilitating connections between specialists, kaiako and whānau.

Referrals to EIS can be made:

- › By early learning services
- › By schools, via the teacher, the school's learning support coordinator (LSC) or Special Education Needs Coordinator (SENCO)
- › By parents, via Ministry regional teams
- › By healthcare providers, such as General Practitioners, Paediatricians, Plunket or Well Child Tamariki Ora.

Support

If you have any questions, get in touch with your **RTLB Cluster Manager** or **Lead School Principal** in the first instance.

More information

- › [Learning Support in the Early Years](#) includes an EIS Factsheet for Schools and Educators.
- › [Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour - Ministry of Education](#)
- › [He Pikorua](#) | Practice framework for Ministry and RTLB learning support practitioners
- › EIS Factsheet for Parents and EIS Service Journey Infographic – 2026 and Beyond [Learning support when your child moves to school - Ministry of Education](#)
- › [Budget 2025 investment for Learning Support](#)

Questions and Answers

Who is eligible for Early Intervention Service?

EIS support is available for learners from birth through to the end of Year 1, from 2026. Children do not need a diagnosis to access learning support.

Can a new entrant be referred to EIS?

Yes, children with newly identified needs in Year 0 or 1 can be referred to EIS, from 2026.

What happens to learners transitioning to school in 2026?

When learners are already receiving support from EIS, and are transitioning to school in 2026, they will be supported by EIS through to the end of Year 1.

Learners arriving at school in 2026, who are not known to EIS previously but are showing early signs of need can be referred to EIS.

If, in 2026 a new referral is received when a child's needs are unable to be met by EIS, some service flexibility is required to make sure learners and teachers get the support they need, when they need it. Conversations involving RTLB Cluster Managers and Service Managers will be required to agree the best approach to meet the child's needs. This will be reviewed at the end of Term 2, 2026.

What about children who already receive support from RTLB?

If a learner in Year 0 to 1 has already been referred to or is receiving support from RTLB, they will continue to receive the service from RTLB. This is a temporary arrangement for 2026 only to ensure continuity of support for learners with additional needs and seeks to avoid unnecessary transitions for learners between services.

What about the targeted (Te Kāhui) and universal (Te Matua) work RTLB does in Years 0 to 1?

When RTLB are already supporting teachers and learners through Te Kāhui and Te Matua supports in Years 0 to 1, this work should continue. From 2026, Cluster Managers, Service Managers and school-based teams are encouraged to work together to plan and deliver supports that best address the presenting needs of the child. Considerations should centre around what's best for the learner and include:

- › collaborating to provide the **support learners and schools need most**
 - › keeping supports **consistent, clear, and well-connected** for learners and teachers.
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What if a child requires learning support beyond Year 1?

From 2026, EIS support is available for learners through to the end of Year 1 at school.

If a child requires learning support beyond Year 1, they may be supported by the Resource Teacher Learning and Behaviour (RTLB), or Behaviour and Communications Services, or within school supports such as SENCO or LSC.
