



Cook Islands Ministry of Education
Statement of Intent
2013-2017

Statement of Intent



The Statement of Intent outlines the priorities of the Ministry of Education for the next five years (2013-2017). It provides stakeholders with an outline of priority areas, their purpose, specific outputs, desired outcomes and an undertaking from the Ministry as to how progress towards these will be monitored.

The priorities are indicative of the current position of education in the Cook Islands. Whilst not detracting from the goals in entirety of the Education Master Plan, the priorities reflect the areas that the Ministry believes are required as a base for the remaining goals to be achieved and are areas where considerable gains need to and can be made.

Achieving the outcomes of this statement will allow the Ministry to live its vision and support the achievement of national, regional and international goals.

Vision:

The Ministry of Education values the unique nature of the Cook Islands.

We contribute to the effective governance of our country and are recognised as leaders in education throughout the region.

The Ministry of Education provides a dynamic and professional environment which promotes and supports life long learning through the provision of quality services.

Ministry of Education, 2009

This Ministry vision works to support the Education Sector vision to “build the skills, knowledge, attitudes and values of Cook Islanders to put their capabilities to best use in all areas of their lives”.

Ministry of Education, 2008

Priority Outcome 1 – Literacy and Numeracy: *That every learner has the literacy and numeracy skills required to access other learning*

Why? Literacy and Numeracy are the foundation skills for all other learning. They also provide the foundation for life skills that all individuals need to be active members of their communities. Whilst a focus is on building literacy and numeracy skills in the early years, all learners must have access to literacy and numeracy programmes support their access to other learning. The Ministry of Education considers attainment in both Maori and English to be a requirement of the literate learner.

How?

1. Resourcing - a focus on resourcing Maori language with relevant high quality resources at all levels of education.
2. The development of literacy and numeracy programmes that provide a scaffold to learners in the post-compulsory sector to other learning opportunities.
3. Reliable and valid monitoring at a national level of literacy and numeracy to allow for the targeted use of relevant resources.
4. Research on literacy and numeracy - research by advisors and teachers to investigate and utilise best practice models in literacy and numeracy for the Cook Islands.

Evidence of Success:

1. Classroom teachers reflect best practice in their delivery of literacy and numeracy programmes.
2. Valid and reliable Literacy and Numeracy data with national snapshots at Years 3/4 and 8 and 11 which meet set targets.
3. Increase in resources (print and digital) available in Maori Language.
4. Research conducted, recommendations implemented and findings published annually on best practice in teaching literacy and numeracy in the Cook Islands.
5. No learner fails to meet programme requirements due to a lack of literacy or numeracy.

Priority Outcome 2 - Student Wellbeing: *That all learners are supported in their learning by an environment that is safe, acknowledges their individual needs and provides for their development*

Why? In order to successfully access learning opportunities, students of any age must feel supported in their learning. The learner must be seen as the whole person and systems to support their holistic development need to be available.

How?

1. Careers Education programmes throughout all levels of education and access to careers counseling
2. Strong school and provider based pastoral care systems are implemented and supported
3. Professional counseling services available to all stakeholders
4. Systems to support isolated learners' access and to be successful in learning are strengthened

Evidence of Success:

1. Student retention – particularly beyond compulsory education and in post secondary programmes.
2. Evidence of mainstreaming students with different learning needs.
3. School/study to work transition programmes.
4. Number of students from isolated communities successfully completing education programmes.
5. Increased access to community education.

Priority Outcome 3 – Programmes and Delivery: *Relevant programmes that ensure Cook Islanders have the skills needed to access further education and contribute to the wider community are available. Delivery mechanisms are varied and meet the needs of all learners.*

Why? Successful learning occurs when a student can see the value of the learning and a link to their future learning, career or desired lifestyle. A range of delivery mechanisms will allow greater access for learners and ensure that the learning and teaching approaches used are the most appropriate to the learner(s).

How?

1. The development and implementation of a range of delivery modalities including broadening the use of ICT to expand and enhance delivery.
2. Increase Scope – the Ministry will continue to review the scope of subjects available, particularly in the non-compulsory years, and add to this in a way that meets the interests and skills of learners and provides Cook Islanders with the skills and qualifications needed to contribute to the national workforce.
3. Alternative Pathways – the Ministry recognizes that traditional school based academic programmes do not suit all learners. By creating alternative pathways for learning, the Ministry in collaboration with other providers, can ensure that the learning needs of all students are met.
4. Fully review the Cook Islands Curriculum Framework to ensure relevancy of objectives and intended outcomes.
5. Support Learning and Teaching practices and initiatives and continue to develop an ongoing research approach to pedagogy in the education sector.
6. Acknowledge the importance of Education for Sustainable Development and Education for International Understanding in the development of programmes.

Evidence of Success:

1. Student/learner retention in education – on home islands and in vocational education.
2. Active participation in programmes measured through the breadth of courses offered and learner participation.
3. Learners have access to alternative programmes which provide the opportunity for success.
4. Increased use of ICT by providers as a learning tool.
5. A revised Cook Islands Curriculum Framework.
6. An active research community in the education sector.
7. Recognised regionally and internationally for our role in ESD and EIU.

Priority Outcome 4: *Learning needs of the wider community are acknowledged and addressed through collaboration and partnerships with other agencies.*


Why? The Education Master Plan has the catchphrase *Learning for Life*. As a key driver of the education sector, the Ministry therefore has a major role to play in ensuring that all Cook Islanders have access to learning at all levels.

How?

1. Continuing Education – ensure that a range of pathways are available for people to access formal tertiary and vocational education through the development of a specific strategy.
2. Community Education – in collaboration with schools and other agencies, the Ministry will encourage and support the development and implementation of programmes that provide learning opportunities to the wider community.
2. Life Skills Programmes – the Ministry will work with providers, communities and other agencies to identify the island/community specific skills that need support and will develop programmes in response.
3. Te Kakaia – the Te Kakaia programme specifically supports parents/caregivers to understand and be able to support their child’s learning at all levels.
4. Resource Support – the development of partnerships with community groups and other agencies to utilize school resources for the purpose of providing formal and non-formal learning opportunities.

Evidence of Success:

1. Development and implementation of formal tertiary and vocational education strategy.
2. Number of successful community education and life skills programmes offered measured through participation, successful completion and course evaluation.
3. Te Kakaia programmes that meet the needs of different communities.
4. Increased utilization of schools and their physical resources.



Priority Outcome 5 – Responsive Management: *The Ministry of Education is capable, professional, efficient and receptive to the needs of and opportunities provided to the education sector in a manner that supports sustainable development of the sector.*

Why? The Ministry of Education is mandated to provide quality education to all Cook Islanders. It can only achieve this if it develops and supports best practice models, operates quality assurance systems and monitors its performance to ensure currency nationally, regionally and internationally. The Cook Islands is a dynamic society and the education sector must be able to respond to changes in a way that ensures sustainability of quality education provision.

How?

1. Safety – the Ministry, in collaboration with CIIC, will work towards ensuring a fitness of purpose for schools. The Ministry will also continue to work with EMCI to ensure that all providers and their communities are prepared to respond to adverse events.
2. Quality Assurance – the Ministry will consistently review its own performance (internal) and be open to audit from other agencies (external). This quality assurance includes school and provider review and the development and implementation of sound forward looking policy that meets the needs of the sector and its responsibility to the wider community.
3. Informed Decision Making – the Ministry will continue to implement a comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to ensure that valid and reliable information is available for use in decision making to mitigate risks to the sustainability of initiatives. A Performance Development System that reflects professional standards and which is supported by purposeful professional development opportunities.
4. A Communication Strategy that recognizes the full range of stakeholders and audiences is implemented.

Evidence of Success:

1. Unqualified audit report and PSC endorsement.
2. All staff actively engaged in ongoing professional development linked to PDS goals.
3. Enhanced learning and teaching areas that are fit for purpose and meet minimum health and safety requirements.
4. High level of compliance, maintenance of accreditations and use of best practice exemplars supported through QMS.
5. Structured Policy and Planning frameworks that are informed by reliable statistical analysis.
6. Level of media releases, community report cards, television advertisements etc. that are appropriate to a range of stakeholder audiences.

