Kindergartens Aotearoa

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**Media release: Kindergartens Aotearoa Welcomes Minister Stanford’s support.**

Kindergartens Aotearoa welcomes the commitment from Education Minister Erica Stanford to retain qualified teachers in our early childhood education system.

The current review of early childhood regulations has suggested that rural, Māori, and Pacific children could be taught by unqualified staff, because of difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified teachers.

The Associate Education Minister David Seymour has supported this, and so it was pleasing to see Minister Stanford supporting a qualified workforce.

Following a release from the Teaching Council stressing the importance of qualified registered teachers, Minister Stanford told RNZ that “it is absolutely essential that we have qualified teaches in the room if we want to get outcomes for children before they go to school.”

“We must make sure that early childhood education is just that – education and not a baby sitting service because if you want young people to be school-ready and hit the ground running they need to have good oral language skills, good numeracy skills and self-regulations and that requires qualified teachers in the classroom.”

Kindergartens Aotearoa spokesperson Amanda Coulston says kindergartens welcome this commitment at a time when reducing regulations threatens quality and safety for children.

“It is pleasing to see the Minister stand up for education for our youngest citizens and recognise that high quality early childhood education imperative. “There is still this misinformed view among some that all that is needed in the early years are good babysitters, and sadly Minister Seymour seems to hold this view. It is reassuring it’s not a view held by Minister Standford”.

Kindergartens Aotearoa represents six regional kindergarten associations around the country that operate more than 260 of New Zealand’s kindergartens, catering for over 12,000 children each day.

For more information:

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