



Specialist Service Standards Review Conductive Education Canterbury

Final Report

18-20 February 2020

Conductive Education Canterbury is an early intervention service in Christchurch.

Children funded to receive a high needs Early Intervention Service: 16

Specialists Employed

Early Intervention Teacher	2.4 FTE
Conductor Practitioner	0.3 FTE
Speech Language Therapist	0.4 FTE

The reviewers were Sally Hogg, Mary Smith and Carolyn Grace.

CONTEXT

The Specialist Service Standards were developed to ensure the provision of quality specialist services for all children and young people with additional needs for learning support. All providers are required to meet these Standards when delivering specialist services.

The Standards have always included the expectation that there will be both internal and external monitoring and review systems.

The revised review process for Cycle 3 builds on this expectation and will support providers to:

- demonstrate beneficial effects that specialist services have on education outcomes for children and young people
 - use internal monitoring and review processes to identify ways in which services and outcomes can continually be improved
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SCOPE

This review evaluated specialist services provided to the children funded to receive a high needs early intervention service. The review focused on Conductive Education Canterbury's knowledge of the quality and effectiveness of their specialist services in promoting and supporting positive outcomes for children.

Pre review information

The provider's annual assurance statements and discussion with management at the pre-review meeting provided initial information for this review.

Review Information

The reviewers met with management to discuss:

- their ongoing monitoring and review processes including an inquiry being undertaken into the effectiveness of their specialist service provision
- selected Management and Organisational Standards important for supporting specialist practice

The reviewers also met with:

- five specialists to discuss services delivered to three selected children for the Implementation Step of the Service Pathway
- three parents of the children to talk about the specialist services their children receive
- three teachers to talk about the specialist services the children receive

FINDINGS

Conductive Education Canterbury's internal monitoring and review of specialist services

Conductive Education Canterbury has a number of processes to evaluate the effectiveness of their specialist services. These are linked to the four pillars in their strategic plan which are Family, Teaching and Learning, Inclusion, and Operational.

Review and evaluation of specialist services happens in a variety of ways, on different levels, at different times and includes:

- regular specialist team meetings
- annual and exit family/whānau surveys
- reviews of policies and procedures
- performance appraisals
- monthly reporting to the governance committee
- evaluative question checklist

Review of specialist practice aligned to the Specialist Service Standards is occurring, however, this is not a formal process and comprehensive records or minutes of self-review of practice by the specialists are not being completed.

Next Step: Management and reviewers agree that formal self-evaluation aligned with the Specialist Service Standards will take place in specialist team meetings and minutes will be recorded of what is being done well and any areas for development.

Conductive Education Canterbury's inquiry

An investigation into effective assessment and analysis processes was completed in 2017.

A further two comprehensive inquiries are being undertaken by members of the specialist team and are supported by the manager. Following the national review of Te Whāriki in 2017, an inquiry into specialists' knowledge and understanding of Te Whāriki was started.

The team looked at the connections between Conductive Education Canterbury's philosophy and practice and the principles and strands of Te Whāriki. Specialists are still on a journey unpacking the strands and Education Support Workers and other members of the team are included in this work.

It was agreed by management and reviewers that the main work on the inquiry has been completed and the inquiry could be drawn to a close. The comprehensive findings of the inquiry can be used as part of the professional learning for all specialists along with future Te Whāriki webinars as they become available. It is recommended that all inquiries are time framed, show regular reviewing points and clear movement through the inquiry steps.

The second inquiry into cultural approaches began in 2019. Considerable progress has been made in a short time and this should be reported on in the 2019 Provider Annual Assurance Statement.

Conductive Education Canterbury has identified a need to demonstrate the effectiveness of its specialist practice leading to measurable outcomes for children. It has been decided to use the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS) as a tool for monitoring and capturing progress towards goal achievement. GAS will be trialled for communication goals initially. The inquiry process will be utilised in this work.

Conductive Education Canterbury's Assurance on Specialist Service Standards

The Management of Conductive Education Canterbury attested that they have:

- written procedures related to all of the Management and Organisational Standards across the Service Pathway
- ongoing internal review of specialist service provision to improve the quality and effectiveness of specialist services and enhance outcomes for the children.

Probes on Management and Organisational Standards

During the review the review team carried out probes on selected Management and Organisational Standards considered to have particular importance for supporting specialist practice.

Reviewers and Conductive Education Canterbury's management agreed that a number of the Service Expectations are being met for the Management and Organisational Standards. These include:

Informed consent

There is evidence of initial and ongoing informed consent occurring. Parents attend the Conductive Education Canterbury sessions and all contacts and discussions are recorded in the child's file. It was clear from discussions with parents that they are fully informed about their children's programmes and management stated they carry out random checks to ensure that ongoing consent is recorded.

Culturally appropriate engagement

Conductive Education Canterbury are currently undertaking an inquiry into specialists' culturally appropriate approaches for working with their diverse cultural populations. There is a cultural advisor on the governance committee who is available to support specialists.

Specialist Performance Management and Professional Development

An annual appraisal process is in place for all specialists and Education Support Workers. A range of appropriate team members contribute information to the appraisal. Individual professional development needs are identified as part of the appraisal process as well as whole staff development needs. Conductive Education Canterbury management and governance recognise that ongoing professional development and learning is an essential component contributing to effective service delivery.

Specialist Supervision

All specialists have regular supervision. The New Zealand Foundation for Conductive Education is currently looking at a process for conductor's supervision now that Standards for Conductors have been developed.

Reviewer findings for the remaining probes are:

Specialist Induction

Conductive Education Canterbury has recently developed an Induction Booklet which has been used with the most recently appointed specialists. Specialist Service Standards are acknowledged as a resource in the Induction Booklet but are not fully described as part of the Induction Booklet. To date the induction process for the new specialists has not been evaluated.

Next Step:

- *Management and reviewers agree that the most recently appointed specialists will be asked to complete an evaluation of the induction process and any refinements needed will be made as a result of their feedback.*
- *Management and reviewers agree that a process for describing the expected specialist practice aligned with the Specialist Service Standards will be included in the Induction Booklet and checklist, along with the Standards document itself.*

Transitions and Closures:

Conductive Education Canterbury has comprehensive written procedures, processes, reports for transitions to school, and closures from their service. This includes exit interviews, transition to school meeting minutes and check in points with the family and school following transition. However, formal feedback on how the transition process went has not been sought.

Next Step: Management and reviewers agree that formal feedback will be sought from families and schools on the effectiveness of the transition process. This information will be shared with specialists and any necessary actions and changes will be made to the transition process.

CYCLE 3 AREA OF FOCUS: The Implementation Step of the Service Pathway

Service Expectation - all children and young people have regularly monitored individual programmes that are implemented in the context of daily activities, are age appropriate, motivating and meaningful.

The specialists at Conductive Education Canterbury are very effective in all aspects of the Implementation Step of the Service Pathway. Specialists are highly competent and collaborative in their work. Management promotes a team approach and described the absence of a hierarchy in the way Conductive Education Canterbury works. Managers are approachable and always available to problem solve, support, debrief and plan with the specialists.

An Early Learning Centre teacher said: *“the specialists work closely with the Education Support Worker and have enskilled her to support us to implement X’s programme. They are fabulous”*

Specialists highly value the relationships they have with families/whānau. They work in close partnership together. Family priorities and aspirations are at the centre of all programme planning around children. A mother said *“I’m very much a part of his programme. I say what I would like to see developed and the specialists listen. I get full reports and can see they have listened to me.”* A father said *“We use the strategies given to us by specialists at home, at mealtime, at bath time, across the whole day.”*

Specialists walk alongside families/whānau in a range of different family environments modelling strategies for them; supporting the children to participate and belong in their local communities. Specialists regularly, both formally and informally, monitor and review the children’s progress towards their goals, adjusting strategies and goals as needed. Family/whānau and early learning centre teachers are asked to contribute information every three months about children’s progress.

A teacher said *“my ideas are listened to. We work very collaboratively with several lenses on the children becoming assimilated in the monitoring and implementation of their programmes”*

Specialists develop programmes which are built on the child’s strengths and interests and therefore are highly motivating and meaningful.

The strength based approach means that all specialists have high aspirations for children’s long term progress and achievement towards developing independence across a range of daily living activities.

COMMITMENT TO ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

Conductive Education Canterbury is well placed to continue to improve the quality of its specialist services leading to enhanced outcomes for children.

Positive leadership from management supports a high performing and reflective specialist team and enables a culture of ongoing reflective practice.

Together management and specialists have identified a number of areas for further work and development to improve and evidence the effectiveness of their practice. This includes the identification and measurement of outcomes for children, initially around communication.

It will be interesting to read about the progress of this work in the 2019 Provider Annual Assurance Statement.

FUTURE ACTIONS

Within this review five areas were agreed by management and reviewers for attention in order to improve specialist services and outcomes for children.

These are:

- Conductive Education Canterbury will undertake formal self-evaluation aligned with the specialist service standards in specialist team meetings and a record will be made of what is being done well and any areas for development.
- The most recently appointed specialists at Conductive Education Canterbury will be asked to complete an evaluation of the induction process and any refinements needed will be made as a result of this feedback.
- A process for describing the expected specialist practice aligned with the Specialist Service Standards will be included in the Induction Booklet and checklist, along with the Standards document.
- Feedback will be sought from families and schools, by Conductive Education Canterbury on how effective the transition process was for them. This information will be shared with specialists and any necessary actions and changes will be made to the transition procedure as a result.
- Conductive Education Canterbury will reinstate the annual survey of Early Learning Centres about the effectiveness of the specialist support they receive.

Progress towards these five areas should be reported on in the 2020 Provider Annual Assurance Statement which will be submitted in 2021.

The Manager Assurance and Eligibility will change the status of the report to final and send a copy to the school.

The next review of Conductive Education Canterbury's specialist service provision will be in approximately three years, as part of the regular review cycle.

Carolyn Grace



Manager Assurance and Eligibility

Date: 8 April 2020