



Insights for school leaders:

How well prepared and supported are new teachers?

ERO looked at the pathways new teachers take into teaching, and the support available for them in their first two years on the job. We found that they are passionate about teaching and enjoy their work, but they aren't as well set up for the role as they could be. There are some supports that need to be improved at a national level, but there are also key actions that schools can take to help our new teachers succeed.

This guide will help school leaders understand what ERO learned about the specific ways that their own school can support new teachers.

ERO looked at how well prepared and supported our new teachers are

Teachers are the most important influences on how well students achieve at school, so it's important that our teaching workforce is well prepared and supported. ERO looked at how well prepared and supported our new teachers are, when they first start and in their first two years in the role.

We looked at the national and international evidence base, and surveyed hundreds of new teachers as well as principals who work with new teachers. We also held interviews and focus groups with teachers, mentor teachers, and school leaders to understand what preparation and support for new teachers looks like in Aotearoa New Zealand schools.

What did ERO find out?

New teachers enjoy the job, and they are more qualified, experienced, and diverse than other teachers.

Ninety-three percent of new teachers report they enjoy teaching, which is great news. They have all completed a dedicated teaching qualification. We also found out that our new teachers are four times more likely to have

a Master's degree than the overall existing workforce. New teachers are also more likely to have prior work experience, and to identify with diverse ethnicities.

There are some parts of the role where new teachers aren't as prepared as they could be.

Despite being passionate about teaching, new teachers are better prepared in some areas of the role than others. They report being prepared in their professional knowledge of teaching strategies, working with other teachers, planning lessons, and creating an engaging environment. However, they are not so well prepared for managing challenging behaviour, working with parents, adapting teaching to different students, and using assessments.

Good inductions and supports at school make a difference.

When they start their first job, most new teachers receive an induction – but they report that not all inductions are effective. We also found that new teachers often lack job security. One in three new teachers are employed on fixed-term employment agreements. In primary schools this is half of new teachers.

The supports that new teachers receive from their school makes a big difference. It's great news that more than 90 percent of new teachers receive mentor meetings, have their teaching observed, and have time to reflect on their teaching.

Sometimes, the support school leaders think new teachers are getting is different to what the new teachers think they receive. This might be because school leaders plan for the support to happen, but then something comes up, like a mentor teacher gets sick or the new teacher has to provide cover, and the planned support doesn't get rescheduled.

Some supports make a really big difference.

New teachers who receive wellbeing check-ins are two times more likely to see themselves in teaching in five years, than those who don't get these check-ins. The biggest boost to new teachers' capability on the job comes through observing others, and having time to reflect on their own teaching.

How can school leaders support their new teachers?

School leaders can make a big difference to their new teachers' capability and wellbeing, by giving them quality development and support. This includes a quality induction, regular wellbeing check-ins from leaders, professional learning opportunities, and time to observe other teachers.

Reflective questions for school leaders?

These questions could be useful to guide your own reflection, or to discuss with other leaders and staff.

- Do all our new teachers receive an **induction**? Is this induction high quality – and how do we know?
- How confident are our new teachers to manage challenging behaviour, work with parents, adapt teaching to different students, and use assessments? Do we need to provide **targeted professional learning and support**?
- Does the school know about the **wellbeing** of our new teachers? Do leaders check in with them regularly?
- Do our new teachers get enough opportunities to **observe other teachers**, either in our school or other schools?
- Do we have new teachers on **fixed-term employment agreements**? Are they still being provided with the high levels of professional support and wellbeing support that are critical in their first two years?

Ready, set, teach: How prepared and supported are new teachers? is our **full report** about this evaluation:

<https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/ready-set-teach-how-well-prepared-and-supported-are-new-teachers>

A short **summary** of that report is here:

<https://evidence.ero.govt.nz/documents/ready-set-teach-how-well-prepared-and-supported-are-new-teachers-summary>



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