



# Early Childhood Services

## Network Management Fact Sheet

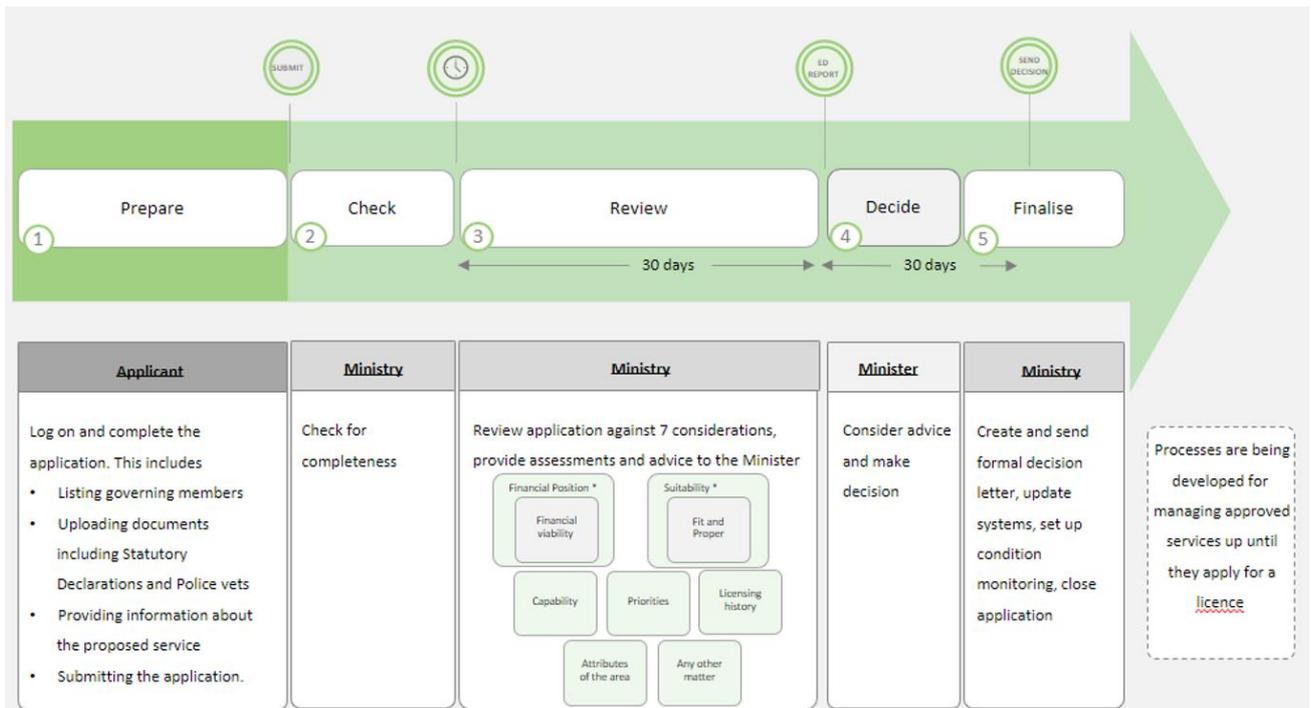
### What is Network Management

From 1 February 2023 anyone wanting to operate a new licensed early childhood service will need to apply for and be granted network approval before applying for a licence.

The network approval process is intended to ensure diverse and sustainable early learning provision that meets the needs of communities across Aotearoa New Zealand. It is part of the Government’s wider [Early Learning Action Plan](#).

### How does Network Management work

The chart below shows the high-level process applications will go through.



\*Note – the Secretary for Education provides assessments of ‘fit and proper’ and ‘financial viability’ as part of the advice to the Minister.

### Are any early childhood services excluded from Network Management

These Māori immersion services are excluded from the network management requirements:

- A kōhanga reo chartered to Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust
- A standalone early childhood service teaching its curriculum through te reo Māori at or close to full immersion to develop high levels of Māori language proficiency and use, or
- Māori immersion early childhood services that propose to teach in te reo Māori for the majority of the time and are affiliated to a gazetted peak body, or
- Māori immersion early childhood services that propose to teach in te reo Māori for the majority of the time and will be provided by or associated with a gazetted iwi or Māori organisation

Excluded early childhood services do not need to apply for their exclusion but will need to demonstrate eligibility for it at licence application time.

## What criteria are applications assessed against

Applications are assessed against the following seven criteria:

- Financial position – is the service likely to be financially sustainable.
- Suitability of the applicant – are the people governing the service suitable to do so.
- Capability – do the people concerned have the capability to deliver the proposed service.
- Previous licensing history – if an applicant has previously (or currently) run a service, how did that go.
- Attributes of the area – does the proposed service match the needs of the proposed location.
- Content of the National Statement – how well does the proposed service align with the National Statement, including the priorities (see below).
- Any other matter that is deemed relevant.

## What are the Government priorities for new services

The areas agreed as priorities for network approval are listed below:

Priority	Definition
Māori bilingual and immersion services (that are not excluded from network management requirements)	Services where te reo Māori is used at least 51% of the time as a medium of instruction.
Hapū/iwi-owned services	Services that are majority owned by hapū or iwi.
Services with a distinct Māori identity and culture	Services that have a distinct Māori identity and use Māori cultural practices and values that inform the service provision.
Pacific bilingual and immersion services	Services where a Pacific language is used at least 51% of the time as a medium of instruction.
Pacific language and/or cultural services	Services that have distinct Pacific identities, cultural practices, languages, and values that inform the service provision.
Language immersion services (non-English/Māori/Pacific)	Services where a language other than English, Māori or a Pacific language is used at least 51% of the time as a medium of instruction.
Services well-equipped for learning support needs	Services with a particular focus on providing services and support to children with a range of learning support needs.
Services well-equipped for migrants and former refugees	Services that are well-equipped for supporting children and communities with migrant and/or refugee backgrounds.
Services planned to operate on a new school site	Services that are planned to operate on a newly-built school site in growth areas or adjacent to growth areas.
Organisations funded by Targeted Assistance for Participation (TAP)	This is a transitional priority that covers any organisations that already have funding approved through TAP prior to network management commencing on 1 February 2023 as set out in the Bill.
Wrap around services	Early childhood services which are set up to facilitate access to other social services, including health and family support alongside early childhood education.

If two similar services are applying for network approval in the same area, the one that more closely meets the Government “priorities” is more likely to be approved. However, meeting a “priority” is not a pre-requisite for receiving network approval. Other factors, such as forecast demand, are also considered. A service opening up in an area of ‘undersupply’ could still gain network approval despite not meeting any of the priorities.

### Where can I find information about my region?

Some regional information is available in the National Statement issued by the Minister, and more is available on the Ministry website. The Ministry website will also point to other sources of regional data, such as the StatsNZ website.

The National Statement will be updated periodically and also contains the above priorities and the criteria used to assess applications.

### Are there any options if my network approval application is declined?

If the Secretary for Education intends to issue an adverse assessment on the criteria of 'Fit and Proper' or 'Financial Viability', the applicant will be given an opportunity to respond before the assessment is finalised. If it is finalised, they can appeal through the District Court.

If the Minister declines an application, the pathway for challenging this decision is through judicial review proceedings.

### Licensing phase

Following network approval, when the service is ready to start operating, the applicant will apply to the Secretary for Education for a licence. Only those with network approval and those excluded from the network management requirements can apply for a licence.

Applicants can be granted up to three years from the time of network approval to apply for a licence. Network approval does not guarantee a licence will be granted to operate an early childhood service. The applicant still needs to meet all of the licensing application requirements.

More information		
1	Visit our website	<a href="http://www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/running-a-service/starting-a-service/network-management">www.education.govt.nz/early-childhood/running-a-service/starting-a-service/network-management</a>
2	Email us	<a href="mailto:ece.networkmanagement@education.govt.nz">ece.networkmanagement@education.govt.nz</a>