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Kei hea ahau ināianai? Where am I now?

**An examination of the positioning of disabled children in the discourses of long-day
early childhood education and care centres in Aotearoa New Zealand**

A thesis
submitted in fulfillment
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by

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Mihi – this is comprised of my pepeha (personal introduction) and my whakapapa (genealogy)

<i>Tēna koutou e hoa ma</i>	<i>Greetings</i>
<i>Ko maungakiekie te maunga tapu, Ko Manukau te moana wairua.</i>	<i>Maungakiekie is my sacred mountain, The Manukau harbour is my sacred sea.</i>
<i>Ko Colin Woonton rāua ko Maree Woonton oku mātua.</i>	<i>Colin Woonton and Maree Woonton are my parents.</i>
<i>Ko Colin tōku pāpā. Kua mate ia. Ko Maree tōku māmā. Kua mate ia.</i>	<i>Colin is my dad. He has passed away. Maree is my Mum. She has passed away</i>
<i>Nō Onehunga rāua.</i>	<i>They are from Onehunga</i>
<i>Ki te taha o tōku pāpā, Ko Percy Woonton tōku mātua pāpā, Ko Margaret Hannam Woonton tōku mātua māmā. Kua mate rāua. Nō England rāua.</i>	<i>On my father's side, Percy Woonton is my grandfather and Margaret Hannam Woonton is my grandmother. They have both passed away. They are from England</i>
<i>Ki te taha o tōku māmā, Ko Duncan Blackwood tōku mātua pāpā, Ko Elsie Millar tōku mātua māmā. Kua mate rāua.</i>	<i>On my mother's side, Duncan Blackwood is my grandfather, and Elsie Millar is my grandmother. They have both passed away.</i>
<i>Ko Robert McAdam tōku hoa rangatira.</i>	<i>Robert McAdam is my husband.</i>
<i>Ko Lesley Lyons McAdam tōku ingoa. Nō Onehunga, Tāmaki Makaurau ahau</i>	<i>My name is Lesley Lyons McAdam I am from Onehunga, Auckland</i>

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ABSTRACT

In Aotearoa New Zealand's legislative and policy environment the concept of inclusion for disabled children is positioned as a human rights concern in which *all* children are afforded the right to attend and participate in all aspects of educational and community life; they are legislatively included. This study examines how the subject positions of disabled children are made available within contradicting discourses currently influencing and being influenced by the largely privately operated long-day early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector. The study argues that a predicament has been created by contradicting discourses, confusing the practices of teachers, centre owners and managers in Aotearoa New Zealand's long-day early childhood education and care sector

Using Foucauldian tools of critical discourse analysis and the work of subsequent post-structuralist writers the study has focused on the understanding that subject positions are created and reinforced by constantly changing social conditions and circumstances. According to Foucault (1984), the normalised subject position is governed by what is deemed appropriate in a context and is maintained by those operating within it. Discourses are explained as not merely reflecting social entities, but as actively constructing them (Ball, 2013; Moss, 2019; Walshaw, 2007).

Employing a Foucauldian lens to examine literature and policy back-grounding provision for disabled children drew attention to the complexities and tensions arising from discourses surrounding inclusion in the sector both at macro and micro levels. The discourses of neoliberalism, biomedicine, and developmentalism were found to position disabled children as *other* (ab-normalise) and *normalise* children presenting with typical development.

Neoliberal discourse contributing to a view of ECEC as a business investment site (Kilderry, 2006; Meagher & Cortis, 2009; Slee, 2011) was found to be a dominant factor contributing to teachers', owners' and managers' confusion regarding inclusion and presented as a discursive trend I have titled Enlightened Ableism. The discursive trend towards enlightened ableism explains the phenomenon whereby teachers, owners and managers speak positively about inclusion yet when asked about the possibility and practicalities of including a disabled child identify the presence of barriers with connections to discourses which privilege the *able*.

GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS

Aotearoa: New Zealand

Kaupapa – plan, purpose, agenda

Kōhanga Reo - Māori language immersion centre

Kōrero – talking

Mahi – work

Mana – prestige, spiritual power

Te reo Māori – Māori language

Wero – challenge

Whānau: family

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE THESIS

1. The provocation to research

I began my teaching career in the 1970s in South Auckland kindergartens. I had never heard of inclusion or mainstreaming or any other of the terms used today to explain strategies for disabled children. It was certainly not a part of my initial teacher training. Over the years I have worked as an early childhood teacher and head teacher, the owner/manager of a long-day early childhood education and care (ECEC) centre and, more recently, as a lecturer in early childhood teacher education. I have practiced under multiple iterations of initiatives designed to support disabled children. These ranged from Special Needs Units permitted to visit mainstream kindergartens, partial integration of groups from special education facilities, part-time supported integration of individual children and, more recently, initiatives to support full inclusion for all children.

While I can remember periods in which disabled children had a growing presence in regular ECEC settings, over the last three decades I have become increasingly aware of a shift in the ways in which disability and inclusion were being explained in the sector. The advent of this shift appeared to coincide with the growing attractiveness of a government-funded business opportunity and the subsequent growth in for-profit ECEC services. A renaissance in the use of deficit paradigms of disability was emerging more frequently in discussions in both the university classes I was teaching and in the ECEC centres I visited as a university supervisor for practicum students. I wondered whether the ECEC sector was inadvertently moving away from its most recent attempts to respect and include all children. My interest in how disabled children might fare in this market-focused environment was piqued. This interest provided a starting point for this project's focus on how disabled children are being positioned in the current marketplace of ECEC

1.2 The focus of the thesis

The title of the thesis: *Kei hea ahau ināianeī? Where am I now?* implies concern about the positions occupied by disabled children in the long-day ECEC sector: Are disabled children being constrained or denied their legislated right to be included? If so, how is this happening and where and how are they subsequently positioned? I pose this question as an addition to the Child's Voice' questions (Carr, May, & Podmore, 2001) which align with the strands of *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa, Early Childhood Curriculum* (M.O.E., 1996, 2017). The curriculum is divided into guiding principles and strands. The Child's Voice questions parallel each strand of the document and are an important tool for teachers to assess their mahi (work) in ensuring that every child receives an equitable, respectful, and inclusive early childhood experience in their service.

- The strand of Wellbeing/Mana Tangata asks: Do you meet my daily needs with care and sensitive consideration: *Can I trust you?*
- The strand of Belonging/Mana Whenua asks: Do you appreciate and understand my interests and abilities and those of my family: *Do you know me?*
- The strand of Contribution/Mana Tangata asks: Do you encourage and facilitate my attempts to be part of the wider group: *Is this place fair for me?*
- The strand of Communication/Mana Reo asks: Do you invite me to communicate and respond to my own particular efforts: *Do you hear me?*
- The strand of Exploration asks: Do you engage my mind, offer challenges, and extend my world: *Do you let me fly?*

For disabled children who are denied or limited in their access to an ECEC service, the Child's Voice questions become redundant therefore a different question must be asked: *Kei hea ahau ināianeī? Where am I now?"*

Throughout this thesis, the term 'disabled children' is used in preference to the person-first discourse of the social model of disability. The social model intimates that if society removes social discrimination disabled people will be able to flourish (Shakespeare, 2017) yet disability, unlike other sites of prejudice and discrimination such as race or sexual orientation, inevitably entails intrinsic limitations that will not disappear because society arranges its communities differently. Therefore, in order to politically challenge barriers to viewing the child's rights as paramount, the child has been placed second in the terminology: to see the child as first one must address the discursively constructed subject positions that situate the child second to the disability

The study explores the espoused beliefs, experiences and practices of early childhood teachers, managers and owners towards the inclusion of disabled children. In conjunction, not by contrast, the views, aspirations, and experiences of whānau (parents) of disabled children are included in the study. The study examines and discusses discourses shaping and being shaped by these views, focusing on the dominant discourses of neoliberalism, human rights, developmentalism and biomedicine.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the position of disabled children, in this thesis concern about the rights to education and care for young disabled children is impelled through the core of the tensions between the nature and purpose of the for-profit market-place context of Aotearoa New Zealand's ECEC sector and the intent of the legislation for inclusion. King and Meagher (2009) make an important point: "Within paid care, the issues of availability and quality are intertwined with the politics of regulation and the profits and practices of care providers" (p. 3). Earlier research (e.g., Essa et al., 2008; Mohay & Reid, 2006; Parish & Cloud, 2006; Purdue, 2009) indicate that the families of disabled children are finding access to long-day ECEC increasingly difficult in this marketplace environment. I am hopeful that this study will contribute to deeper understandings about the ways in which the workings of Aotearoa New Zealand's ECEC sector as it is currently organised may be positioning disabled children in contradiction to the legislation. As Penn (2013) suggests, relying on the market as a workable model for the organisation and delivery of childcare may

have its limitations.

This introductory chapter outlines the legal, political, educational and policy contexts in which the study is situated, beginning with an outline of Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation and the curriculum document which guides teaching professionals' practices for inclusion of disabled children.

1.3 Legislation and Te Whāriki: Early Childhood Education Curriculum

In Aotearoa New Zealand the inclusion of disabled children into regular, long-day ECEC centres is protected by several key items of legislation: *The Human Rights Act* (1993), *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989), *The New Zealand Disability Strategy* (Ministry of Health, 2001) and *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2006). Additionally, by way of the New Zealand Early Childhood Regulations (New Zealand Government, 2008), all licensed ECEC centres are required to adhere to the principles of *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna ō Aotearoa, Early Childhood Curriculum* (M.O. E., 1996; 2017) as the guiding document for practice. *Te Whāriki* is a stand-alone, bicultural and bilingual (Te Reo Māori/English) curriculum document which contains reference to the inclusion of disabled children. In many ways, *Te Whāriki* reflects the intent of Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation for inclusion. The initial edition of the curriculum was the first of its kind in the world, was lauded internationally, and engendered great pride amongst Aotearoa New Zealand's ECEC professionals. Both the original document (1996) and the more recent rewrite (2017) are comprised of principles, strands and goals which are intended to be read holistically. Human rights and social justice intent are evident throughout the text of the original document: "Adults working with children should establish programmes and strategies which actively promote equity of opportunity for children and counter actions or comments that categorise or stereotype people" (M.O.E., p. 65).

Te Whāriki was first developed in the early 1990s at a time of major education reforms in Aotearoa New Zealand which, as Mitchell (2003) noted, for the first time included early childhood in the education sector. These reforms in the education sector coincided with major social and economic reforms making Aotearoa New Zealand a text-book example of a neoliberal project. According to Duhn (2006) *Te Whāriki* was a product of both liberal and neoliberal paradigms. Duhn was arguing here that via this

curriculum, the child was being repositioned as an 'ideal child', a product of the perspectives of adults who, in thinking about childhood, inevitably articulated some of their own understandings of the world: adults who were being influenced by globalisation and neoliberalism. Interpreting Duhn's ideas, the language of *Te Whāriki* sets up a contradiction for teachers in ECEC between what the document states and the market environment in which it is expected to play out. This aligns with the position taken in this study especially, as Duhn further posits, while early childhood education is not compulsory in Aotearoa New Zealand, the preschool child has become part of a grid connecting the 'normal' young child with educational institutions.

The original *Te Whāriki* (M.O.E., 1996) devoted only two paragraphs of a 100 - page document to the inclusion of disabled children. There is an even more diluted reference to diverse ability/learning needs in the second edition (M.O.E., 2017). The original document states that the care and education of children with special needs [disabilities] will be provided within the diverse range of early childhood services. The importance of 'developmentally appropriate' activities is also highlighted alongside the need for Individual Development Plans (I.D.P.) for children who require additional resources and support. While inclusion appears to be the intention, there is little in either document to counter the positioning of disabled children as other than *other*. Macartney (2019) goes further by suggesting that it is disappointing that disability and ableism are not adequately theorized, visible, or addressed within *Te Whāriki* (M.O.E., 1996, 2017) and argues that "because *Te Whāriki* lacks a clear and consistent sociocultural and human rights-based approach to disability this omission leaves space to exclusionary structures, thinking and practices to continue unrecognized" (p.122). As such, this omission can and does result in exclusionary teaching practices and curriculum, which as Macartney (2019) suggests, do not equally recognize and nurture the mana of disabled children and their whānau.

The following section explains the structure of the sector as it currently organised, identifying possible challenges for teaching professionals regarding inclusion.

1.4 The Current Structure of the Sector

Private ownership in the ECEC sector has burgeoned over the past three decades with most recently available statistics indicating a greater than 5:1 majority ownership over community (non-profit) centres (New Zealand Government, 2017). All children attract government funding based on age (the younger the child, the greater the funding). In addition, and to increase participation in the sector, the Twenty Hours ECE policy for children over the age of three was introduced. Twenty Hours ECE is a higher funding subsidy. It means that if your child is 3, 4 or 5 years old and goes to a early learning service or Kōhanga Reo (Māori language immersion centre) that offers Twenty Hours ECE, the cost can be fully subsidised for up to 6 hours a day and up to 20 hours a week. This policy has further encouraged private sector investment in long-day education and care, particularly in poorer areas. Participation has increased to the point where 95% of young children are attending an ECEC service (Education Counts, 2012), the majority of which is provided by private operators/investors.

Accompanying the shift to private investment in the sector has been a gradual shift in the ways in which the sector is articulated. Emerging from an economic paradigm promoting the sector as a prime opportunity for financial yield, the early childhood education profession is frequently described as an 'industry' with the status of children increasingly viewed (and marketed) as a tradable commodity (Goodfellow, 2005; Lloyd & Penn, 2013; Moss, 2019). While the community-owned/non-profit ECEC centre is not strictly considered to characterise this business approach since their structure prevents distribution of profit to individual investors (M.O.E., 2011), these centres still need to remain solvent and to compete in the market in the same way as their for-profit counterparts. A responsibility at least to remain solvent, and at best profitable, is a key characteristic of the sector. The key question is reiterated: What is the status of disabled children in this marketplace? The next section outlines the principles of neoliberalism and explains its foundational influence on the positioning of disabled children.

1.5 Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism can be viewed as a critical feature of the philosophical and economic foundation of the ECEC sector as it is currently organised. According to Perez and Canella (2011); “Neoliberalism is grounded in the philosophy of classic liberalism that the individual should function autonomously, based on self-interests and be free from the intervention of the State” (p. 48). The aim of the neoliberal position, therefore, is to reduce the state’s financial burden, allowing it to withdraw from direct responsibility and promote policies that encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own economic wellbeing. Roberts (2007) explained that the tentacles of the [neoliberal] market spread rapidly in the western world and neoliberal ideas exerted influence on the policy agendas of both conservative and progressive regimes. “The reform process was grounded in a view of human beings as rational, self-interested, choosers and consumers” (Roberts, 2007, p. 350).

Neoliberalism poses unease for disabled children because it privileges individualism and stresses educating for self-reliance. As Peters (2001) contends, the development of future citizens who have the means to provide for themselves economically with minimal cost to the state is a key feature. Hence, education is viewed as a private rather than a public/social good. This is demonstrated in a report of business owners’ interests in education by Valente and Collins (2016).

The business community is the consumer of the educational product. Students are the educational product. They are going through the education system so that they can be an attractive product for business to consume and hire as a workforce in the future (p. 1)

The notion of individualistic self-reliance is characterised by and promotes personal agency with regards to physical and intellectual achievement, self-actuality and the accumulation of goods and finances (Peters, 2001; Türken et al., 2016). As Davies and Bansel (2007) further suggest; “Under neoliberalism, both government and society have taken up, as their primary concern, their relationship with the economy” (p. 249). The ‘ideal’ neoliberal society is therefore comprised of those who [financially] have, can and do. In a nutshell, neoliberalism insists on expanding the market logic and

principles (for example, self-interest, calculability, competition, efficiency, profit) to all areas of life – it is a doctrine of radical marketisation (Mladenov, 2015). Within neoliberal discourse, disability and difference are constructed as private ‘problems’, deficits and lacks in and of individuals. Because neoliberal structures privilege agentic, self-motivated subjects over those perceived to be dependent, less able, and unproductive (Perez & Canella, 2011; Moss, 2019), neoliberalism puts up a strong challenge to the principles of inclusion.

Key features of neoliberalism include privatisation or shifting of the control of public services operated by the state to corporate, for-profit groups (Olssen, 2006; Baltodano, 2012). Davies and Bansel (2007) suggest there is considerable evidence that the development of neoliberal discourses, policies and practices has been concerted and engineered by those with a great deal to gain financially. Regardless of whether this is so (and this thesis is not concerned with this argument), over a period of 15 years (1984-1999) successive governments have embraced this philosophy. The original impetus for laying the foundations for a neoliberal agenda in Aotearoa New Zealand came from the 1984 (4th) Labour Government who had spent a nine-year term in opposition. As May (2009) noted, “this new government questioned the relevance of centralized bureaucracy, and the extent of state involvement in the economy, for both ideological and fiscal reasons” (p. 203). While welfare liberalism placed government in a principal role of providing for its citizens, this new regime argued for minimal state involvement in people’s lives (Farquhar, 2008).

By way of this neoliberal agenda relations were reconfigured between government, private enterprise and society. “Public institutions, such as schools and hospitals, previously supported as essential to collective wellbeing were reconstituted under neoliberalism as part of the market” (Davies & Bansel, 2007, p. 254). Education was reconfigured and became increasingly viewed as a commodity to be traded and consumed (Roberts, 2007).

1.5.1 Neoliberalism and the ECE sector

The government interest in education grew from the adopted neoliberal standpoint that education should produce citizens who will contribute to the economy of the country in the future. Education was seen to share the main characteristics of other commodities traded in the marketplace, a position that Aotearoa New Zealand's Treasury reinforced. Hence, business-talk became the new language of the time, and in education generally, understandings of childhood were reconstructed and linked to global economic agendas. Privately owned ECEC, alongside its community operated counterparts and originally overseen by the Department of Social Welfare, became part of the Department of Education in 1986. The Labour government, according to May (2009), had been persuaded that there was a crisis in early childhood provision and that increased investment would bring benefits to children, whānau and the nation as a whole. As May (2009) asserted, early childhood services were the first rung in a seamless education system, hence focusing the Labour government's position on under five-year old children. "During the late 1980s and early 1990s, several major administrative shifts occurred - the movement of services to education, and the implementation of early childhood policy reform known as 'Before Five' " (Meade & Podmore, 2002, p. 9). As Meade and Podmore (2002) record, ECEC (long day) services were latecomers in gaining government funding until 1990 when a common funding formula for all early childhood services was introduced regardless of operating structure. In Aotearoa New Zealand, it appeared that the state had presented an attractive offer to private enterprise.

Returning to disabled children, this thesis argues that because neoliberalism has now become so entwined in the organisation of the ECEC sector, teaching professionals may be less likely to recognise the influences of the marketplace on their practices towards disabled children and their families. Perhaps, as Harvey (2005) suggests, neoliberalism is having pervasive effects on ways of thinking to the point where it has become common-sense? This idea that the legislated intent for inclusion of disabled young children may be at odds with market interests is not new. This work is not the first to investigate the juxtaposition of human rights ideals and neoliberalism and raise questions for marginalised groups (e.g., Lloyd & Penn, 2013; Moss, 2019; Purdue, 2009). It is, however, unique in providing a focused attempt to explore the

inclusion predicament of teachers, owners, managers, whānau (families) and disabled children in the sector by looking further than specific issues of disability and inclusion towards an examination of the complexities of constructions of disability influencing teacher responses to disabled children in a neoliberal climate. The following section provides an overview of these constructions.

1.6 Disability and/or impairment?

Many prominent disability studies writers, theorists and activists have made the important argument that disability, rather than residing within individuals, is a product of disability discrimination and social injustice (Barton, 1998; Fulcher, 1999; Oliver, 1996; Shakespeare, 2017; Siebers, 2008;). Put forward some decades ago, the social model of disability draws on the view that it is society that disables people with impairments: “Disability is something imposed on top of our impairments by the way we are unnecessarily isolated and excluded from full participation in society” (Union of Physically Impaired against segregation [UPIAS](1975). The basic premise of the social model of disability is that disability is constructed by society, and that disabled people are discriminated against on the basis of biomedical, deficit constructions of disability (Connor, et al., 2008; Gabel, 2005; Goodley, 2007; Macartney, 2019)). Hence, the social model distinguishes between disabled people as oppressed and society as the oppressors. The social constructionist approach has been powerful politically because as Shakespeare (2017) states: “The social model is simple, memorable and effective, each of which is a key requirement of a political slogan or ideology” (p. 198). He also notes that the social model requires understanding of key dichotomies: “The first of which is that individual impairment differs from the social construction of disability that might surround impairment” (p. 195). While biomedical models of disability focus on individual deficits and raise issues of discrimination, inequality and injustices based on deficit cultural understandings, structures and practices (Macartney, 2011), the social model, on the other hand, offers political unity for disabled people and practical ideas for identifying public barriers to justice. Politics aside, and raising limitations of this social constructionist view, Shakespeare (2017) argues that this social constructivist position fails to address the issue of pathological impairment. He contends that the impairment remains with the individual even when society removes

restrictions.

This thesis draws on both positions. An appreciation of disability as social construct is acknowledged as evident in much of Aotearoa/New Zealand's disability policy although care has been taken to ensure impairment is considered in the language of the following example.

Disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have is impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual, or other impairments. Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have (Ministry of Health, 2001, p. 7)

Disability as a social construct is contradicted by neoliberalism. The positioning of personal agency by way of neoliberalism, subsequently (re)personalises disability in education settings creating contradictions to the legislation and curricula and, by way of capillary discourses, the predicament for teacher/owners/managers' approaches to inclusion mentioned earlier in this chapter. Capillary discourses are discourses that serve to extend to an institutional setting the knowledge and practices valued by a regime of truth (Foucault, 1980, p. 201). Capillary discourses, as Worthman and Troiano (2016) suggest, facilitate the flow of beliefs and procedures associated with specific regimes of truth. Because the notion of inclusion for disabled children is presented in *Te Whāriki* (2017) in a generic grouping with gender, ethnicity, diverse ability and learning needs, family structure and values, socioeconomic status and religion, it is possible that the rights of disabled children are seen as contestable among the pressures of meeting the needs of other groups. Next, I introduce the concept of inclusion as a contested term.

1.7 Inclusion and inclusive education: What are we speaking of?

Whilst it is accepted that the term inclusion transcends mere application to disabled children and concerns the inclusion of all children (Qvortrup & Qvortrup, 2017), in this study I have used the term as it applies to disabled young children in education. Since the World Conference on Special Needs Education that was held in

Salamanca 25 years ago (U.N.E.S.C.O, 1994) there has been an international commitment to inclusive education. As Fasting (2013) put forward, this resulted in inclusion being an important concept in the educational debate and practice of most countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (O.E.C.D.). Developing from 1994, U.N.E.S.C.O. has developed two key themes: *Education for All*, which has its roots in regular education's attempts to address marginalised groups, and *Inclusive Education* which has emerged from the field of special education. Over time Kuippis (2013) argues, *Education for All* has played a stronger role and disabled children as a specific group have become less of a focus in U.N.E.S.C.O.'s work.

Slee (2011) urges consideration of inclusion as an ethical and political position, thus challenging the attachment of hierarchical values to people that lead to some children being considered more worthy than others. He describes inclusive education as an apprenticeship in democracy which aligns with UNESCO's *Education for All* position. From Slee's argument one can draw an understanding that inclusion is both a philosophical position and a practice.

The language of Aotearoa New Zealand's early childhood curriculum documents and underpinning legislation is largely drawing on the philosophical positioning of inclusion whereas it is the practices surrounding inclusion that are raising concerns for access. Such concern is also raised by Qvortrup and Qvortrup (2017) suggesting that despite the labours of politicians, researchers and practitioners, ongoing efforts to develop inclusive education sites appear troubled, problematic and contested. Tracing problems associated with inclusion, necessitates an investigation into the values placed on such human attributes as ability, expediency, appearance and so forth. While such an investigation is largely beyond the scope of this study, practices that privilege ablebodiedness are at the core of the study and introduced in the next section.

1.8 Ableism

Conceptualising ableism is a key aspect of this thesis. Ableism is central to the field of Disability Studies (D.S.) which at its core examines disability as a social, cultural or political phenomenon (Bogart & Dunn, 2019; Kumari & Campbell, 2001). Kumari-Campbell (2001) claims,

Ableism refers to a network of beliefs, processes and practices that produces a particular kind of self and body (the corporeal standard) that is projected as the perfect, species-typical and therefore essential and fully human. Disability then is cast as a diminished state of being human (p. 44)

Rauscher and McClintock (1996) define ableism as a pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion with origins in deeply rooted 'standards' about health, productivity, beauty and the value of human life. The ideal person conforms to such standards and the imperfect is put aside. Understanding ableism is critical to this thesis as it aligns with the exacting values of neoliberalism.

In summary, I now return to the title of this thesis: "Kei hea ahau ināianai: Where am I now"? In order to consider the key terms of the investigation with which this study is concerned, the study examines research and argument that place importance on concepts such as ableism, biomedicine, social constructionism and neoliberalism as processes by which certain subject positions (which is discussed further in Chapter Two) of disabled children will become manifest.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter Two describes the theoretical framing for this thesis. The study is constructed using a discursive analytical approach. Additionally, while this work is not autoethnographic per se, it does include reflexive commentary which has been guided by understandings gleaned from the field of autoethnography as a means of reflecting on my own work in the sector over time. The study is a post structural endeavour relying largely but not solely on the ideas of Michel Foucault (who pronounced himself not to be poststructuralist) as well as subsequent Foucauldian scholars (e.g.: Ball, 2013; Moss, 2019; O'Farrell, 2005; Olssen, 2006). I acknowledge an underlying tension between Foucauldian discourse analysis and (autoethnographically influenced) reflexive commentary which is discussed in detail in the Chapter Two. Chapter Two explains this more closely drawing on Jackson and Mazzei's (2008) suggestion that using such personalised commentary is in keeping with Foucault's (1988) description of 'curiosity', evoking the care one takes of what exists and what might exist.

In Chapter Three, an examination of the literature and policy backgrounding inclusion in ECEC alongside the influence of neoliberal economics on provision is elaborated using understandings of discourse. This chapter primarily focuses on academic literature, Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation and policy, and in some instances, material intended for the general public. The nexus between tensions and challenges for those charged with responsibility for the inclusion are explored, and the current gap between policy and practices is made visible. The literature selected and critiqued develops the context of the study by tracing discursive capillaries back to the core principles of dominant discourses impacting on the inclusion project and positioning disabled young children as 'other'.

In Chapter Four, the pragmatics of the research design and process are explained and deliberated. The study engaged with three separate groups of participants by way of semi-structured individual interviews. The first participant group was made up of centre owners and managers from private, corporate, and community-owned long day ECEC centres. Teachers from different but similarly structured centres made up the second group of interviewees. The third participant group was comprised of whānau/parents of young disabled children in the wider Auckland area.

In Chapter Five, the first of two findings/discussion chapters, the experiences and perceptions of the sector through the lens of whānau of disabled young children are examined and discussed with a focus on the origins of whānau expectations of the sector and the challenges experienced. Brought forward in this chapter are whānau interactions with, and responses to dominant discourses in the sector.

In Chapter Six, contradictory discourses evident in the responses of teachers, owners and managers are brought to the fore. The interaction between neoliberal discourses, biomedicine and a discourse of human rights is investigated as likely creating a predicament for teachers, owners and managers. The analysis proposes that teachers, owners and managers are being both shaped by and shaping a new discursive trend termed enlightened ableism, whereby inclusion is spoken of in positive terms, but structural barriers to inclusion are cited as a reason to exclude.

Chapter Seven, the reflexive account, discusses the findings in light of my decades-long experience in the ECEC sector alongside and with relevance to the current organisation of the sector. In this chapter I draw on examples from my own experiences, both current and historical, and analyse information about teachers, owners and managers' frustrations currently evident, to illustrate and expand on the findings from the teachers, owners and managers and whānau (Chapters 5 and 6).

Chapter Eight, the concluding chapter, draws the findings together, outlining possible limitations for the scope of this study and providing glimpses of potential for the sector and all its participants moving forward.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This study examines how subject positions are made available to disabled children within discourses dominant in the ECEC sector and asks questions about whether disabled children are constrained or denied their legislated right to be included in the ECEC sector within such discourses. The specific questions that guided this study are outlined later in this chapter (2.9) and clarified in Chapter Four. In this chapter I explain the theoretical and methodological approaches I have undertaken. As identified in the introductory chapter, the study relies largely but not solely, on the ideas of Michel Foucault as well as subsequent poststructuralist scholars (e.g., Ball, 2013; Moss, 2019; O'Farrell, 2005; Olssen, 2006). Additionally, while this work is not autoethnographic, it does include reflexive commentary which has been guided by understandings gleaned from the field of autoethnography as a means of reflecting on my own work in the sector over time. This is discussed more fully later in this chapter.

The term discourse as used in this study is described as systems of thoughts composed of ideas, attitudes, courses of action, beliefs and practices that systematically construct the subjects and the worlds of which they speak (Lassa, 2006). Discourse analysis in Foucauldian terms offers a way of showing how social and political hierarchies are produced and sustained within fields of knowledge in which they operate (Gunn, 2019; Olssen, 2006). Such hierarchies put forward subject positions that provide us with ways of representing ourselves and others (Ball, 2013; Gunn, 2019; Walshaw, 2007). Hence, the concept of subject position holds that people make sense of who they are by locating themselves (and others) within culturally circulating discourses and narratives (Guilfoyle, 2016). Foucault (2004) defended the idea that subject positions are constructed within such discursive processes and practices involving many members of a community over time (Angermuller, 2018; Guilfoyle, 2016; Walshaw, 2007).

As explained in Chapter One, Foucault argued that his work was not post structuralist while others (e.g., MacNaughton, 2005; Moss, 2019; Walshaw, 2007) have deemed him so, based on his work regarding truths, power and power relations. As

Moss (2019), explains; “Foucault’s work offers an understanding of how power works, both at the micro level, through everyday power relations in which we are all involved, and through dominant discourses with their regimes of truth that assert that they are the one and only way to talk, think and behave” (p. 92). This study is not overly concerned with where Foucault is situated in academic debate but rather, with the key ideas he put forward and their usefulness for examining the subject positions made available to disabled children within the discursive predicament of ECEC as it currently stands.

2.2 Introducing Michel Foucault’s ideas

French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) held keen interest in the relationship between power, knowledge and truth. His methods of genealogical inquiry and discourse analysis illuminated the workings of power as it moves on, in and through human bodies (Gunn, 2019). Fenech and Sumsion (2007) explain that power is fluid and multi-directional, local and unstable: “In recognising that power is exercised at multiple local sites, a myriad of ways in which power may be affected and experienced through the chain of relations becomes possible” (p. 111). As Fischer (2009) further suggested, central to Foucault’s work from the outset was the questioning of the forms of rationality that society has historically constructed. Foucault was interested in knowledge and how systems of knowledge are developed. Fundamental to his theorising is that discourses play a significant role in constructing what is real for each of us (McLaren, 2009).

In his genealogical work Foucault focused on the positions made available through discourse and how the techniques of professions had helped to produce them (Gunn, 2008; Middleton, 2003; Olssen, 2006): Foucault was looking for traces of the present in the past and vice versa. For this study, undertaking genealogical examination of the discursive features building up to the current provision of ECEC is helpful in understanding the political and social drivers that have contributed to the dispersion and privileging of particular discourses likely to position disabled children as of lesser value. In Foucauldian genealogy, part of the aim is to “show how the world is constructed: to illuminate how discourses produce practices, to show how subject

positions become manifest, to locate the ways in which knowledge is produced, and subsequent to this, how the professions apply it to bodies” (Gunn, 2008, p. 65).

Foucault was interested in serious statements; truth claims that belonged to a single system of formation and the points in time where they become powerful. He claimed that discourse was that which was ‘already-said,’ and broadened the definition further to include what is ‘never-said’ and ‘not-said’ (1972, p. 43). “A discursive formation comprised the regularity that obtains between objects, types of statement, concepts or thematic choices” (Foucault, 1972, p. 38, cited in Olssen, 2006, p. 10). These systems bring together key ideas and meanings and underpin behaviours by giving certain ways of being permission, while others are put to the side. Therefore, using Foucault’s ideas for discourse analysis should not be considered the equivalent of an analysis of language alone.

In this study, discourse is understood by way of Foucault’s explanation that statements make persons – we do not merely speak discourse, discourses speak us (Angermuller, 2018; Ball, 2013; Türken et al.; 2016; Walshaw, 2007). This being so, as discourses speak other people – they position people, create subjects and create us, the speakers, as subjects at the same time. Hence, using Foucauldian tools of analysis for this study allowed me to show how discursive systems are produced, maintained and speak subject positions for disabled children in the ECEC sector. While a discourse may be subtle or hidden, as Bird (2003) notes “the power of language and established habits maintain a certain obvious view of reality that seems ‘natural’ and hence difficult to question” (p. 37). As Foucault (1973) purported, the way we talk about the world and the way we experience it are inextricably linked – the names we give to things shape our experience of them, and our experience of the world influences the names we give to them.

This study intends to question the influence of market driven ECEC provision, to develop understanding of how neoliberal discourse has competed for location, examine the extent to which it has gained traction in the ECEC sector, and locate the human rights discourse of the guiding documents for inclusion in this competition. Because Foucault claimed that discourse gives permission for particular ways of

speaking, behaving and positioning while disallowing others (Ball, 2013; Walshaw, 2007), it was important that this study use this approach to examine the extent to which teachers, owners and managers in the ECEC sector might have taken on board the discourse of neoliberalism to the extent that other ways of seeing and acting are being put to the side. As Moss (2019) describes it, the discourse is the story and stories, or the ways in which we see, make sense of, and re-tell the story silences other stories. The stories then construct or weave reality for us and stories [discourses] have consequences.

I acknowledge here that I cannot be separated from the discourses – I too am subject to and a subject of discourses. It is for this reason that I considered it crucial to the analysis to include a reflexive commentary at points throughout the thesis and as the focus of Chapter Seven. In choosing to do this I acknowledge, as Angermuller (2018) put forward: “Whenever people use language, they participate in valuation practices, i.e. they give value to themselves as well as to others” (p. 414). Next, I introduce Foucault’s work on subjectivities and the relationship with subject positions as they are derived through discourses.

2.3 Foucault, subjectivity and subject position

Subjectivity can be understood as a mode of constituting, understanding, and relating to ourselves (Taylor, 2017). The term as described by Taylor implies personal agency - an exercise in free thought – however Angermuller (2018) argues that “humans do not have a timeless, universal subjectivity but rather become subjects by entering a discourse in which they occupy subject positions” (p. 146). In Foucault’s writing on subjectivity, Ball (2013) explains two distinct points of emphasis; two meanings to the word subject. “Subject to someone else by control and tied to his own dependence and [secondly] tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge” (Foucault, 1982, p. 212).

Hence, the term subjectivity itself describes the condition of being subject to, or a target of power through power/knowledge relations (Foucault, 1980; Dreyfuss and Rabinow, 1982). Foucault (1982) went on to say that subjectivity is the way we give form to our lives: Is what we do rather than who we are and that our subjective experience is created by constantly changing social and cultural conditions and circumstances. Türken et al (2016) provide an example relevant to this study: “Neoliberalism is a theory of ... political economy that has become a hegemonic discourse that proposes human wellbeing can best be achieved by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills ... characterised by free markets and free trade” (p. 33). It provides a subjectivity that offers form to our life and how we live it. There are limited subject positions within this discourse. In Türken et al’s neoliberal example, the ‘successful’ subject position is occupied only by those with entrepreneurial skill and opportunity. Hence, as Walshaw (2007) explains, subject positions become manifest through discourses, are therefore political rather than personal, and are born of the social contexts from which they draw power. Adding to Walshaw’s explanation, Angermuller (2018) puts forward that subject positions become valuable by absorbing

the time and energy of the members of a discourse community which is how some subject positions gain more value than others. Understanding how subject positions of disabled children become manifest within discourses dominating the long day ECEC sector is the crux of this thesis and in the next section I explain how understandings of the norm are relevant to such research about subject position.

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2.4 Foucault and the Norm

The norm is a fundamental concept in the social sciences (Foucault, 1979). Norms are commonly defined as rules or expectations that are socially privileged at a certain point in time. Foucault argued that central to processes of classification is normalization. Further to this point, Taylor (2009) argued that normalising norms encourages subjects to become highly efficient at performing a narrowly defined range of practices. It is the primary and fundamental character of the norm (Ball, 2013) and how the norm is discursively construed and acted upon, that is of relevance to any academic work regarding inclusion (Graham & Slee, 2008; Slee, 2011). Such understandings are instrumental in framing a notion of normal and other. Each discursively constructed truth about the norm makes it possible for the materialisation of subject positions and as Gunn (2008) argued, discourses have a limited number of subject positions to be occupied and each has consequences for how one is perceived. Commenting on Foucault's (1981) urge to challenge the power of discourses which make subject positions appear usual, Taylor (2009) wrote,

Foucault's contention that nothing, even those concepts, categories, and principles that appear to be most fundamental to making sense of the world, need simply be accepted, and that such refusal creates possibilities for developing alternative modes of thought and existence which increase persons' capacities and expand their possibilities without simultaneously increasing and expanding the proliferation of power within society (p. 46) .

Central to Foucault's theorising were questions about what is considered legitimate knowledge at a certain place and time. Questioning how certain knowledge arises, how it is passed on and what function it has in constituting subjective experiences, and in shaping society is key to this study. Foucault (1981) argued that discourses must be treated as discontinuous practices which cross each other, may be juxtaposed with one another, and can exclude or be unaware of each other. It is this argument of Foucault's that suggested the notion of predicament, the term used in Chapter One to describe the ECEC sector currently. As my research intent is to gain a deeper understanding of the subject positions available in the intersection and interaction of discourses of disability, economics and human rights in the ECEC sector and how this has come to pass, Foucault's writings about how discourses normalise knowledge must be treated in analysis was of particular relevance. Foucault (2004) defended the idea that subject positions are constructed in discursive processes and practices involving many members of a community over time. Having discussed Foucault's thinking about construction of the norm the next section examines his ideas around the body and how this has raised a tension for this study.

2.5 Foucault and the body

As the framing of the study developed, I realised that I would likely need to consider the reading of the 'material' body in the data. Foucault's concern with the body was as a site of social control (Tynan, 2015). In the works of Foucault, existing

social and cultural norms construct the normative subject: the order of discourse defines what is considered to be a subject or a body that matters and, more concretely, the subject materializes through a repeated performance of signifying (i.e., naming) (Wehrle, 2015). Poststructural research has been criticised for its radical account of the body as socially constructed (Larsson, 2012) and I sought some clarity of thinking around this critique that would be workable for this project. How could I do justice to the ‘provocation’ for the study – the disabled child – if the child is purely a product of the discourse? While the disabled child is not a practical part of this study, the disabled child is certainly a point of reference and the pathology of the disabled body is to be expected in the responses of many participants. Evans (2004) contended that a central problematic remains over the role of the material body. His writing was largely concerned with Physical Education but had relevance for this study: “Different bodies do matter...how they move and how they look is central to whether individuals feel comfortable and are judged as having ability and hence status” (p. 78). This study interprets this as discursive; bodies that do or don’t ‘fit’ with society’s expectations of the day must therefore be socially constructed. I did however choose to remain mindful of Evans’s point. It isn’t evident that Foucault was disregarding of the prediscursive nature of the body but as Olssen (2006) argued, Foucault [just] had no wish to uncover and free these prediscursive experiences from “the tyranny of the text” (Foucault 1972, p. 47, cited in Olssen, p. 43). As Foucault (1977) insisted: “One needs to study what kind of body the current society needs” (p. 58). In this study, I have dealt with this tension by taking the position that the discourse is the reading of the body; it is through the discourse the body materialises. In other words, the prediscursive body exists as matter and the discourse regulate who and what *matters*.

As this section has identified, there are tensions that are bound to arise in a study of this nature and this is one of several reasons why I have chosen to include my own quasi-autoethnographic reflexive commentary alongside the analysis and discussion.

2.6 Reflexive commentary 'under the influence' of autoethnography

Here I build a case for *reflexive commentary* as an appropriate accompaniment to Foucault's ideas about knowledge and truth. My decades of experiences in the sector have clearly contributed to my position in this work and it is therefore appropriate to explore my own subject positions as part of this study. The subject positions that I have occupied are important to the understandings I have drawn, and the interpretations made. My life as parent of a child for whom exclusion was an ongoing risk is a part of me that needs acknowledging in the interpretation of the data. My roles as a teacher, the owner of an ECEC centre, and as a teacher educator have given me an insight into the ECEC sector that I wish to draw on. Cunningham and Carmichael (2018) claim that where the researcher invests emotionally in their writing and within the topic they are studying, it must be acknowledged.

The decisions I made about how to conceptualise this study were mine as a researcher. It became increasingly clear in the framing of this study my own voice could be included; that I could explore my own subject positions alongside those of participants. Jackson and Mazzei (2008) claim that autoethnographic-style commentary is in keeping with Foucault's (1988) description of 'curiosity', evoking the care one takes of what exists and what might exist. While poststructural theories reject the presence of an experience that can be fully understood, Foucault himself was excited by 'curiosity' – an acute interest and concern for everything that exists, an eagerness to look at something familiar and find it strange (O'Farrell, 2005). Hence, I include reflexive commentary, informed by autoethnography, not as a contradiction to the Foucauldian approach, but rather as a complement trusting that such curiosity will support my own troubling of the experiences I bring forward. I have come to understand that there are different ways to read and interpret theory: I have read Foucault through my own lens and therefore on this premise it is acceptable to add my own views and experiences. It is as Kauffman (2005) contends,

Understanding myself as a text, a discursive template writing the world and being written by the world. I have come to recognize that in a dialectical process, every text I read is interpreted and rewritten through my own biography and my autobiography is rewritten as I read it through alternate texts (p. 577)

As a researcher with broad involvement in the ECEC sector as a profession, and because I have held similar roles to the participants in the three groups in this study, I cannot be set aside from my own theorising. Hence, I took on board Chang's (2008) contention that one's story is never made in a vacuum; others are always visible or invisible participants. Therefore, while the study is not autoethnographic per se, I acknowledge it contains a measure of myself that is unavoidable. I was there so to speak, but who I was when I was there, and what had gone before for me also came along for the ride. Although the focus remained on the participants, the nature of the interviews interactively produced meanings that could not be separated from my own feelings and responses. As Geertz (1973) commented on the subject of such qualitative research: "What we call our data are really our constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to" (p. 9). This quote well describes the orientation of this study and the role that I have played in it. Marshall and Rossman (2011) also stressed the importance of the researcher systematically reflecting on who she is in the inquiry and being sensitive to her own personal biography and how it shapes the study. Therefore, when I speak of the data in this study it is with the understanding that data cannot be separated from myself. As St Pierre (2013) explains: "Something called data cannot be separate from me, out there, for me to collect" (p. 226). More so, the participants and I called the data into being for a purpose, brought it forth so to speak, and acknowledged that it was meaningful for the purpose of this work. I need to search for cohesion in this data I have created, avoid claiming it as knowledge but rather trust in the possibility that a new perception may arise. Therefore, the impetus for my decision-making is governed by my conceptions of the way the social world is constructed and how it operates to construct.

This work is not me writing my story but at pertinent points it has been necessary to explain my views, and draw on my experiences, about the wider contexts in which events took place and are taking place currently. Wherever possible I have included reference to the views of others in the attempt to either stabilise or disrupt my analysis. However, although the focus was on the participant and her or his story, my words, thoughts, and experiences are, at points, acknowledged. For example, as Ellis, Adams and Bochner (2004) suggest, personal motivation for doing a project, knowledge of the topics discussed, emotional responses to an interview, and ways in which the interviewer may have been changed by the process of interviewing need to be exposed and reflected upon.

I acknowledge Davies and Gannon's (2006) argument: "Poststructural theories problematise taken-for-granted humanist notions of the subject as capable of self-knowledge and self-articulation" (p. 474).

The self both is *and* is not a fiction; is unified and transcendent *and* fragmented and always in process of being constituted, can be spoken of in realist ways *and* cannot; its voice can be claimed as authentic *and* there is no guarantee of authenticity (Davies & Gannon, 2006, p. 95)

Reflexive commentary (influenced by autoethnography) presumes that one can speak for oneself while poststructural theorists such as Foucault have argued the impossibilities of this. Gannon (2006) however, offers a way forward by suggesting that in such personal commentary: "The writer writes the writer as a complex (im)possible subject in a world where (self)knowledge can only ever be tentative, contingent and situated" (p. 474). Gray (2017) argues that there can be no single interpretation because one's interpretation of the facts - the facts themselves - are products of one's own interpretive stance. The facts or truths in the case of the theoretical positioning of this study become manifest through the dominant discourses of the time. Hence, as Clandinin and Connelly (1994) suggest, in research that seeks to discover in this case the personal experiences of others, as is particularly true of the whānau participants,

there is a unique relationship between researcher and participant, and as Wall (2006) contends, the intent of this type of research is to acknowledge the inextricable link between the personal and the cultural whilst making room for non-traditional forms of inquiry and expression.

I reiterate that the reflexive commentary in this thesis is therefore guided by but not wholly committed to autoethnographic account. “Autoethnography is an approach to research and writing that seeks to describe and systematically analyse (graphy) personal experience (auto) in order to understand cultural experience (ethno) (Ellis, 2004; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Wall (2006) also suggests that the freedom of a researcher to speak as a player in a research project and to mingle his or her experience with the experience of those studied is precisely what is needed to move inquiry and knowledge further along. While I am not convinced that any knowledge is values free, without researcher voice, in this case my own, it is difficult to make visible one’s own interpretations of the interpretations of others without an approach that affords this. I draw here on Sparkes (2000) who describes autoethnography as producing “highly personalised accounts that draw upon the experience of the author/researcher for the purposes of extending sociological understanding” (p. 21). At points throughout this work I have drawn on my own experiences, and very rarely, my accompanying emotions at the time, to make links to wider issues and tensions surrounding inclusion evident in the comments of the participants.

Autoethnography as methodology has been quite widely criticised for being self-indulgent, individualised and even narcissistic (Atkinson, 1997; Sparkes, 2000). I remained mindful of this disapproval but because my own experiences aligned with recurring themes, I believed I could take a moderate autoethnographic-style approach (Wall, 2016). Reflexive commentary is a guided commentary which adds another dimension to the findings that might otherwise be lost. The study required my honesty and integrity from the outset, and this would have been too difficult without exposing my own ‘take’ on the contexts and my own experiences in each of the participant roles. I have taken care in this moderate approach to avoid any evidence of self-therapy, indulgence or self-focus beyond that which helps to explain my own views and

understandings of the wider contexts in which events of likely exclusion have taken place. Such commentary is described as allowing for innovation, imagination, and the representation of a range of voices while also sustaining confidence in the quality, rigour and usefulness of the research (Wall, 2016). Ellis and Bochner (2000) described the need to concentrate on ways of producing meaningful, accessible, and evocative research grounded in personal experience: The type of research that would sensitize readers to issues of identity politics, to experiences shrouded in silence, and to forms of representation that deepen our capacity to empathize with people who are different from us. To this end, at different points my own voice has merely joined with others in the study while at other points I have drawn on my broad experience in the sector to shed light on possibilities for understanding how discourses have come to take hold.

Voice and reflexivity are catch-terms in personal writing. Much has been written about reflexivity whereby the researcher pauses to consider how her presence, standpoint or characteristics might have influenced the outcome of the project (e.g., Wall, 2006). This is not to be confused with reflection which is a 'looking back' activity and one that Roddy and Dewar (2016) describe as a solitary activity carrying with it a sense of familiarity and comfort. Reflexivity involves others and is said to unsettle representation as one constantly constructs meaning and social realities as others are interacted with. Gray (2017) further claims that reflexivity provides insight into phenomena and how such insight is constructed. Voice, subsequently, refers to the way authors represent their personal reflexivity in their work. The argument in this study, as discussed in the preceding chapters, is that discourses (the influence of which I am not immune to) play a large part in this. In order to reveal researcher voice, at points throughout this work I have included personal comments in text boxes. These comments are a way of evidencing my own feelings and experiences in response to participant contributions that I have personal relationship with.

2.6. Chapter Summary

To summarise the theoretical framing of this study: The study employs Foucauldian understandings of discourse and investigates the ways in which discourses create subject positions of varying value to explore how inclusion for disabled children in the long-day ECEC sector is promoted or impeded. Alongside Foucault's work, autoethnographically informed reflexive commentary is added to expand analysis of the contexts in which such subject positions are likely made available for disabled children, their whānau and the teachers, owners and managers. Foucault himself offered researchers flexibility and creativity around the use of his work.

All my books ... are little toolboxes ... if people want to open them, to use this sentence or that idea as a screwdriver or spanner to short-circuit, discredit or smash systems of power, including eventually those from which my books have emerged ... so much better! (Foucault, 1975, 'Interview with Roger Pol Droit', cited in Patton 1979, p. 115)

Ball (2013) noted the frustrations expressed by Foucault himself that so much effort was devoted to writing about what he might mean rather than doing the sort of practical analytic work that he advocated so vigorously. Put simply, what this study intends is take care to be explicit about how the data analysis is approached without risking becoming subordinate to the rules of its methods-making. Furthermore, the project needs to be explainable, including its theorising, to all research participants, especially the whānau participants who shared so openly (and on occasion with anger, grief and sadness) in order to honour their contributions to the study. In doing so, honouring the intent of the study while ensuring the nature and purpose of the study is not over-simplified which could be misleading for participants.

In its gestation this project was somewhat naively premised on the sole belief that much of the tension and complexity surrounding disability was [governmentally] political, and pejoratively perhaps, that the market model currently operating in the sector was opportunistic, borne of neoliberal economic policy, and potentially hostile

to the inclusion of disabled children. In hindsight, there was imminent danger of falling into an un-Foucauldian gaze that assumed a division between the groups of the controllers and the controlled, or as Pringle (2003) explained, “the presumed division between the dominators and the dominated” (p. 107). “In much of the work that purports to be Foucauldian in educational studies, power is reduced to domination and knowledge is detached from power” (Ball, 2013, p. 19). As Fischer (2009) reminded,

Foucault taught us to not see power as something negative but rather as something that produces, incites, is exercised. For him, power works in a complex, productive and subtle web that sets in motion other webs of discourses, knowledge, and daily and institutional practices – which are, in turn, related with the production and circulation of truths (p. 209)

Pringle (2003) further explained that Foucault presented power as omnipresent because it was produced through all actions and relations between people. While the supposition that competition for knowledge production in ECEC was due to powerful and potentially contradictory ‘truths’ embedded in the discourses of disability, neoliberalism and human rights may (or maybe not) be borne out, Foucault’s work has challenged the researcher to look for subtleties and nuances; to look at what wasn’t seen; to look for the unusual in the usual. Ferguson (1990) made the claim that in our society dominant discourse tries never to speak its own name. Ferguson’s comment served as a reminder early in the study that if something appeared obvious to a researcher, it likely may not be as it appeared. The data in this project would be produced by this project, not freshly discovered, they would not necessarily be new but would be looked at afresh, and as Lather (1992) suggested, the practices that we invent to discover the truth about ourselves are fragile. Therefore, the research questions were designed to produce data affording the opportunity to expose nuance over the obvious, the subtle indicators of something bigger, something deeper, and possibly interrelated.

2.7: Research questions

In light of the issues raised in this chapter, this study poses the questions:

- 1) Which discourses appear to be gaining traction in the ECEC sector in Aotearoa New Zealand at this point in time?
- 2) How are these discourses transpiring in terms of policies and practices?
- 3) What subject positions are available to disabled children within the discourses operating in the sector?

CHAPTER THREE: CRITIQUING THE LITERATURE: Revisiting and rethinking

3.1. Introduction to the literature

This chapter explores literature contributing to an understanding of the current contexts of ECEC and the discourses that have, and possibly still are creating subject positions for disabled children in contradiction to the intent of the Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation for inclusion (refer 3.2) forms the starting point for this study. Hence, this review begins by exploring various structures and interpretations of policy. Foucauldian genealogies, as Olssen (2006) explained, "trace an essential, historically constituted tie between power and knowledge" (p. 14). Taking this approach has allowed me to focus mainly on 'problems' for inclusion emerging in the literature and examine the 'historical knowledges' that have brought these to the fore. According to O'Farrell (2007), Foucault argued against history as a process towards an end goal: "That all events and all change are tending towards an absolute point" (p. 75). Foucault challenged the notion of history as a trajectory of continuity because he saw it as propping up the status quo with all its injustices over time. However, as Kuhn (1970) suggested, different periods in time structure their systems of knowledge according to different principles and I was looking for shifts in the principles that positioned disabled children differently, not an end goal such as Foucault argued against. The literature examined in this chapter indicates that a complexity of discourses is contributing to a predicament in the sector which is (re)positioning disabled children: such discourses are not necessarily new but present differently today and for different reasons than perhaps they did historically.

3.2. The legislative and policy platform for inclusion

Disabled children in Aotearoa New Zealand have legal right of access to, and full participation in early childhood education settings by way of a suite of acts and policies cited in the introduction to this work. Additionally, the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Ministry of Health, 2001) assures New Zealanders of the intent to guide action to promote a more inclusive society for persons with disabilities. Among the proposed actions of this strategy are the promotion of full participation, breaking down barriers, challenging exclusionary attitudes and practices and supporting appropriate and inclusive educational settings to meet individual educational needs: “The government will take the lead” (p. 3). This mélange of legislation and policy appears to have had its origins in liberal discourse in that it takes protecting and enhancing the freedom of the individual to be the problem of government (Buckler & Dolowitz, 2004). It could also be described as fitting within the frame of social liberalism which Buckler and Dolowitz claim may be understood to represent a middle way between the alternatives of market freedom and a traditional social democracy. The fact that much of this legislation was developed or at least conceived of at a time when Aotearoa New Zealand was undergoing radical economic reform is of interest here. During a Labour government’s term of office, Mitchell (2019) explained that “these ideas were adopted single-mindedly across many spheres of operation” (p. 17). Mitchell went on to explain that this New right economic theory was applied to reforms in education and particularly to the ECEC sector, which became increasingly privatised. Mitchell was describing what I have portrayed in this study as neoliberalism.

Neoliberalism can be broadly understood as a new form of liberalism which potentially integrates 18th and 19th century notions of free market and laissez-faire into all aspects of contemporary life (McCarthy et al., 2009). Economic policy of devoutly neoliberal intent has been generally described as anti-statist in that it openly opposes or diminishes state intervention into the personal, social and economic affairs of individuals. Whether or not this type of economic reform has had significant negative impact on public support for citizenship rights such as inclusion is a topic for

debate although Humpage (2011) argues that there is no overwhelming evidence that neo-liberal reform has resulted in a paradigmatic shift away from public support for social citizenship in principle. Neoliberal reform, however, has clearly changed the socio-political environment in which such legislation must play out. To enter this debate, it is unlikely that public views about citizenship and rights can remain outside the sphere of influence of such dominant discourses in our society. As Fischer (2009) writes of Foucault's central questioning about truth, it is important to ask what truths are constructed within certain schemes of rationality, and who becomes the subjects of these discourses? Taking this further, Foucault encourages us to view our own role as subjects and creators of subjectivities: we are all subject to and subjects of discourse (Ball, 2013).

Explaining trajectories of legislation, some years ago March and Olsen (1989) made a rather generalised contention that the pathway between government legislation and the implementation of subsequent policy is influenced by the beliefs, values, attitudes and understandings of the persons involved in both the 'making' and the 'implementing'. This was further discussed by Boston and Callister (2005) who questioned how policy makers might foster social cohesion and national unity in a context of increasing cultural pluralism and conflicting values. Values are seen as expressions of wider discourses in this thesis. Moreover, with legislation involving issues of human rights and social justice imperatives such as the inclusion of disabled children, the arena in which policy is developed and executed can be heavily 'land-mined' by strongly entrenched moral and political views and public assumptions, many of which are reinforced by other (and often unrelated) legislative and policy objectives. Armstrong, Belmont and Verillon (2000) also reminded, "policies do not exist in a vacuum; they reflect underlying ideologies and assumptions in a society" (p. 7). As Moss (2019) suggests, "dominant discourses do not become dominant by chance or by any intrinsic merit" (p. 15). The 'story' told by neoliberalism, as Monbiot (2017) explains, dominates our political and economic systems, it seeps into our language and our understanding, it becomes natural. To this point Parker (2008) contributed that disabled people and their families cannot achieve rights and justice if they are impeded by a society which embodies policies that while intended for amelioration of

marginalisation are in fact embedded in structural and attitudinal barriers born of contradictory paradigm. As Foucault (1979) explains, disciplinary power such as by way of policy, brings those for whom the policy is intended into focus – a compulsory visibility which maintains the subject as disciplined. One effect of this visibility is classification, and classification in neoliberal terms is necessary as Ball (2013) posits; teachers are being nudged into the techniques of economic behaviourism whereby performance and productivity are overriding the intent of legislation and policy for inclusion.

Approaching policy in general terms, Lascoumes and Le Gales (2007) suggest policies are fundamentally conceived as pragmatic: as a political and technical approach to solving problems via instruments and further argued that these instruments are ‘natural’; they are viewed as being at our disposal with the only questions they raise relating to whether they are the best possible ones for meeting the objectives set. Lascoumes and Le Gales further argue that every policy instrument constitutes a condensed form of knowledge about social control and ways of exercising it, and instruments at work are not neutral devices: they produce specific effects, independently of the objective pursued which structure public policy according to their own logic. In the light of this view it is fair to say that policies theorise the relationship between those governing and those governed and as such, the policies for supporting and resourcing inclusion of disabled children might also be theorising the relationship for management purposes and thus overriding the human rights legislation’s original intent.

March and Olsen (1989) further described policy instruments as ‘institutions’ in the sociological use of the term, involving co-ordinated sets of values, beliefs, and principles of action, underpinned by moral principles unequally assimilated by the actors and yet which guide their practice. This phenomenon is reflected in Foucault’s (1965) comment that “people know what they do; frequently they know why they do what they do, but what they don't know is what *what* they do does” (cited in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983, p. 187). This is clearly explained by Lascoumes & Le Gales (2007).

[policy] Instruments are really institutions, as they partly determine the way in which the actors are going to behave; they create uncertainties about the effects of the balance of power; they will eventually privilege certain actors and interests and exclude others; they constrain the actors while offering them possibilities; they drive forward a certain representation of problems (p. 9)

The Aotearoa New Zealand legislation for inclusion has been critically discussed and the tensions and complexities of subsequent policies and practices examined by a wide range of authors concerned with inclusion in Aotearoa New Zealand (e.g., Ballard, 1999; Bevan-Brown, 2006; Gunn et al., 2004; McArthur & Morton, 1999; Wills & McLean, 2008). New Zealand's dominant education policy instrument, Special Education 2000 (M.O.E., 1996) has featured strongly in much of this discussion. The policy itself was designed to provide both a climate for inclusion, which suggests interest in and understanding of the paradigm deemed necessary for the success of the process, and a framework for addressing all aspects of the education of students with 'special needs'. There was, and still is, funding directed at children with very high needs, funding for severe behavioural concerns, and a communication initiative for students with speech and language difficulties. Schools receive direct funding in the form of the Special Education Grant (SEG) which is payable on a formula basis and which can be used at the discretion of the school. While there are funds allocated to the early childhood sector, the SEG was not made available directly to individual early childhood centres. This funding for early childhood education is managed by central bodies such as Group Special Education (G.S.E.) a branch of the M.O.E.) and C.C.S. (formerly Crippled Children's Society) and as such is not available for creative use by teachers. This reinforces Lascoumes and Le Gales (2007) claims regarding privilege and constraint; the possibilities afforded to early childhood teachers are constrained by the positioning of the disabled child in a special education framework, hence privilege is afforded to the special educator whose *raison d'être* is the disability, over the teacher who is involved with the child purely because they are a child.

Generally, inclusive practice in early childhood centres has been loosely guided by overarching, somewhat generic legislation, a curriculum document which makes passing reference to the child with disabilities and a handbook distributed by the Ministry of Education entitled *Te Reo Tātaki: Including everyone* (2000). There has been no update since the first publication. *Te Reo Tātaki* claims amongst its guiding principles inclusive education as ‘good education’ and as ‘good sense’ (M.O.E., 2000). In an earlier publication (Lyons, 2005) I suggested that both principles were value-laden and open to interpretation. “Historically, and in the name of ‘good sense’ people with disability have been negated, segregated, and even castrated” (p. 18), and with regard to ‘good education’, aside from a huge shift from absolute segregation for disabled children we have far to go in achieving any sort of consensus regarding good education, inclusive or otherwise. What is perceived as good or valuable underpins the ways in which society measures quality and as Dahlberg and Moss (2008) argue, quality is neither neutral nor self-evident, but saturated with values and assumptions.

A distinct influence on the subject positioning of disabled children emerging in the literature is a funding structure which focuses on deficit. The fact that funding is attached to disability labels and is contestable gives a clear message to teachers, families and communities that where legislation refers to rights, the parent policy of Te Reo Tātaki, Special Education 2000, equates rights with needs. Simply put, implementation of this policy is reliant on the identification of ‘need’, biomedical confirmation of the ‘need’, resourcing of the ‘need’ and professional support to manage the ‘need’. Such policy affirms the message for teachers that disability is problematic and costly, and teachers are not experts. Research published by Purdue (2009) contained clear examples from the early childhood sector of children’s participation being openly opposed or made conditional because of funding or resourcing constraints; her data indicated that lack of resources is used as an excuse not to include those children who were perceived as requiring a greater investment of work, attention and resourcing. Hence, the rights of the disabled child to access and participate fully has become lost in a milieu of complex and disabling managerial detail, drawing on discourse of disability which positions disability as pathological and personalised. How this situation has become central to this study is discussed in the following section.

3.3. Theorising Disability

This section begins with a definition of disability worthy of deconstruction. Fulcher (1999) stated that disability is complex, and the complexity arises largely from society's construction of the disabled rather than the impairment itself.

Disability is an extraordinarily complex phenomenon but this complexity derives, primarily, not from the intricacies of physical lesions but from the social and political use to which the construct of disability is put, independent of the presence, or intricacies, of an impairment (p. 25).

Earlier, and still predominant views in Western society, define disability [state of disablement] as primarily a biomedical phenomenon, a deficit-based and personalised paradigm (Corbett, 1996; Fulcher, 1999; Slee, 2011). In further discussion of this paradigm, Kearney and Kane (2006) refer to Mercer's (1973) two theories of disability: Firstly, the pathological theory which involves inherent embodied biological symptoms, and secondly his statistical theory whereby the person is identified in terms of the extent to which they differ from others. Foucault reframed these enduring truths as discursive constructions, arguing that our taken-for-granted knowledge and solid conviction of right and wrong hide the constructed nature of such knowledge (Johnson, 2014). This is particularly relevant for biomedical approaches to disability in which Foucault (2003) expressed specific interest, describing biomedical discourse as constructed under a lens which distinguishes illness or disability from the person. However, the biomedical discourse of disability remains established as 'grand narrative' assuming an authority, particularly in special education, that as Brantlinger (2006) argues, communicates individual, deficit and biologically based views of disability as a straightforward presentation of scientific fact.

Furthermore, in early childhood education tradition, an allegiance to the discipline of child development has iterated Mercer's statistical theory by rendering universal truth to a view of child development as following a relatively linear and biologically determined pathway (Canella, 2000; Dalli, 1999). The theory of child development and its offspring Developmentally Appropriate Practice (D.A.P.) has historically provided the early childhood sector with a vehicle for measurement and comparison which aligns with Mercer's second theory. It is assumed to be unbiased and neutral because it is a factual representation of reality. However, such child development knowledge and the programmes that draw on it, tend to default to the dominant group's belief systems, norms and stereotypes (Macartney, 2011). Foucault (2003) argued for reframing such enduring truths as discursive constructions: The processes of assigning disability labels by way of developmentalism to individuals is a key example of the power of discursive practices in shaping reality and experience. Regarding knowledge, truth and subsequent power, Foucault (1980) said that truth is a thing of this world, with each society having its regimes of truth, politics of truth, and mechanisms by which each is sanctioned.

Developmental theory, however, is still deemed helpful for accessing funding for children with disability, which further reinforces biomedical definitions and labels and works in deep contrast to current approaches to assessment in early childhood which are purportedly competency based for children identified as typically-developing. That such a discourse still penetrates much of New Zealand's 'special education' policy, while not evident in the overarching legislation, has relevance to Hahn's (1986) contention that how disabled persons are positioned is fundamentally a policy question inferring that the definition of disablement is constructed within the act of policy making and implementation. To this point Selvaraj (2015) argues that while the term inclusive education was earlier regarded as a progressive idea, and was included in the policy statements, it has jostled uncomfortably between funding and policy mechanisms which have militated against both its acceptance and its success.

While many disciplines have historically characterised disability as a solely biomedical condition, a genetic condition, a disease category or a personal deficit,

others have adopted the framework of disability as a consequence of social, environmental and political conditions (Rioux & Valentine, 2006; Wendell, 1996). Siebers (2008) wrote of emerging fields of disability studies which define disability as a product of social injustice, not one that requires cure or elimination of the defective person, but significant changes in the social and built environment. The biomedical and social models of disability have been widely critiqued, most strongly perhaps by Shakespeare (2017), who suggests that the social model of disability creates a straw person and positions medicine as undesirable. He argues that where people are unable to get around, for example, societies which aspire to being inclusive and egalitarian have a duty to compensate such individuals. However, disabled people also face other difficulties arising from the predicament of having impaired bodies.

Several writers have moved beyond social, political, and environmental constructions of disablement (Goodley, 2007; McLean, 2008; Siebers, 2008) and into critical discussion of disability as cultural and minority identity. As Siebers (2008) stated, “to call disability an identity is to recognise not a biological or natural property but an elastic social category both subject to social control and social change” (p. 4). As a non-disabled researcher, I chose not to enter this argument but rather to explore the contexts in which each is positioned. Next, this study puts forward an examination of inclusion itself.

3.4. Understandings of Inclusion

In addition to the problematic nature of defining disablement, it could also be argued there have been shifts over time in the understandings associated with the term inclusion (Kearney & Kane, 2006). Inclusion as a philosophical stance presents in the earlier literature as relating to issues of social justice and equity (Ballard, 1999; Oliver, 1996; Slee, 2000) yet it has remained, in its general usage, an elusive concept. Kearney and Kane (2006) also argue that this is because inclusion is still an evolving concept, and it seems more probable that it is because it has been technically interpreted and used by different people in a variety of ways to achieve a range of

goals and agendas. In education, policy has persisted in framing inclusive education as something to be done, a practice for accommodating disabled children, as opposed to a philosophy drawing on discourses of social justice. Slee (2011) suggests that research around inclusion and inclusive education has largely focused on attitudes to difference, embedded in which is a repeated construction of the disabled child as a problem to others which needs to be remedied by attitudinal shift. Slee further comments that inclusive education is in a state of inertia stemming from confusion over meanings, ideological jousting, and the reduction of inclusion to a technical problem to be fixed by policy.

Aotearoa New Zealand's own *Special Education 2000* policy with its goal of achieving a world class inclusive education system over the next (now last) decade (M.O. E., 1996) does not contain a definition of inclusion, nor has it ever been officially defined (Kearney & Kane, 2006). Broader use of the term has involved disability, sexualities, ethnicity, gender and class (Gunn et al., 2004; Qvortrup & Qvortrup, 2018), which have never been mutually exclusive categories. Clearly, the term inclusion has been used in reference to diversity which Boston and Callister (2005) defined using terms such as heterogeneity, variety and difference, or conversely as uniformity and homogeneity. It would be difficult to argue against the notion that that central to most definitions of inclusion are philosophical underpinnings of emancipation, social justice and citizenship (Ballard, 2003; Cole, 2006; Gunn et al., 2004; Lyons, 2005; MacArthur & Morton, 1999) yet, momentarily disregarding the celebratory and appealing social justice rhetoric, the term inclusion has inevitably implied and spoken of 'otherness' which Graham and Slee (2007) argue has worked to produce both margin and centre through the privileging of universal categories. Ravaud and Stiker (2001) concur, succinctly stating that the terms 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' operate in tandem and can only be understood in relation to one another. Reinforcing this view, Kearney and Kane (2006) contended that inclusion is inextricably linked with exclusion and vice versa: "To be included is not to be excluded. Excluded and included are two sides of the same coin and to understand one, requires an understanding of the other" (p. 202). Introducing another layer, Graham (2006) raised the argument that the term inclusion implies 'a bringing in' suggesting that it is not those on the 'inside' who are really

expected to change. Thus, the terminology privileges the pre-existing (Graham & Slee, 2008) and has given rise to further opportunity for policy makers to hold on to power. As Graham and Slee further suggest, when inclusion is the focus, we must ask into *what* do we seek to include?

As mentioned earlier, many definitions of inclusion have involved the perception that inclusion is a discernible event (Kearney & Kane, 2006), an observable phenomenon so to speak and one which MacArthur & Morton (1999) suggested gives rise to the possibility of lesser quality of education and care once included. The child may be visible in the regular setting, but the practices may not be involving actions complicit with the Ministry of Health's (2001) aims of "promoting full participation, breaking down barriers, challenging exclusionary attitudes and practices and supporting appropriate and inclusive educational settings to meet individual educational needs" (p. 3). Hence, as Graham and Slee (2008) noted additional complexity; "to be inclusive is not necessarily to include" (p. 278).

Perhaps agreement regarding conceptual understanding of inclusion has been difficult to achieve because, as Rioux and Valentine (2006) suggested, while the concept of human rights is widely accepted as an organising principle for law, policy and advocacy its meaning in practice is also widely divergent and actively debated. Writing in reference to education policy generally, Liasidou (2008) stressed that local cultures, language and ideological dynamics infiltrate and eventually domesticate inclusive policies. "It is important to adopt cross cultural perspectives and interrogate the ways that the cultural politics of inclusive education policy-making are played out, contested, manifested within distinct socio-political contexts" (p. 483). As Wasserman (2001) argued, disability advocates may be inclined to treat philosophy as the "handmaiden of policy" (p. 219) and reminded us that philosophers may tend to oversimplify [disability] for the sake of argument. An appreciation of this view appears inherent in the writing of Clough (2001) who posited; "a philosophy of inclusion may well be naive or even dishonest, because it assumes what it seeks to establish; that inclusion is morally necessitated and structurally indicated: get the structures right one might say, and humanity will follow" (p. 73). Azzopardi (2005, in Goodley, 2007) went

so far as to claim that inclusion had become a cliché. Next, I take these tensions surrounding inclusion into the marketplace of ECEC.

3.5. The Marketisation of ECEC

The provision of ECEC in New Zealand has been undertaken by a wide range of providers, both private and community owned and which attract considerable state funding (Kesting & Fargher, 2008). Penn (2013) describes this as a neoliberal, demand-led model, further alleging that demand-led subsidies, such as those explained in Chapter One, incentivise entrepreneurs. Smith, Tesar and Myers (2016) also suggest that in Aotearoa New Zealand, 'vulnerable children' are stigmatised, and current policy encourages private investors and shareholders into the early childhood education market and to receive government subsidies and therefore enables private companies to profit from the public finances (p 28).

Prior to the 1990s, support for early childhood services in Aotearoa New Zealand was framed around issues of equity for children, women and minority groups however, it later became apparent that such investment was being rationalised as a prudent economic investment for the nation (May, 2009). It is noticeable that the structure and the focus of the ECEC sector currently has been strongly affected by neoliberal market structures and reforms taking place in Aotearoa New Zealand, and in Australia, over the past two decades. As government has divested itself of responsibility for considerable aspects of education management, the young child in ECEC has increasingly become positioned as a tradeable commodity linked to private investment.

Meagher and Cortis (2009) put forward a set of arguments against the marketisation or commodification of the care sector with relevance for both young children and the elderly. In many of these arguments, moral and economic dimensions are inextricably entwined. They also suggest that one important argument against marketisation of the sector is that profit is seen as a poor incentive for achieving social goals (for example the inclusion of disabled children). Further to this point, Schmid (2001) emphasised that care is a public good, better produced and distributed according to human need than skewed by investors' self-interest.

Of interest to many critical researchers in early childhood education (e.g., Goodfellow, 2005; Lyons, 2013; Penn, 2009; Sumsion, 2006.) is the extent to which privatisation of the sector impacts on the provision of 'quality' generally. Underpinning this concern is the relationship between economic and social goals. "Having a business orientation may result in greater concern for efficiency than for establishing relationships that provide for continuity, consistency and stability" (Goodfellow, 2005, p. 55) or as Cribb and Ball (2005) argue, "privatisation does not simply change how we do things, it also changes how we think about what we do" (p.121). Cribb and Ball's view can be understood using Foucault's (1973) claims that dominant discourses give us permission to speak and act in ways that reinforce the discourse (and not to speak in ways that do not): we do not speak the discourse so much as the discourse speaks us. The standard rationale for using the private sector to provide childcare, Penn (2009) writes, is that it is more innovative, flexible, and more efficient; and that competitiveness drives up quality. As Peters (2013) asserts: The market is the ultimate test and a business that survives and grows is one that has rigid quality control mechanisms that persuade the buyer that the product will always look the same.

Penn (2009), in querying whether ECEC is an area where standard economic precepts of competitiveness and efficiency are a good fit, suggests the notion of consumer is problematic ECEC because whānau are consumers on behalf of their children but often have limited experience of the service they are purchasing while children themselves are largely voiceless. Sims (2017) contributes to this point arguing that neoliberal thinking does not translate easily into social services and education: "In creating an education system where education is a product like any other product, there arises conflict around who is the ultimate consumer of education; is it the students, their families or the employers that will ultimately provide jobs for them?" (p. 2). Sims further argues that neoliberalism has had a devastating impact on the ECEC sector largely because of this focus on standardisation and positioning of children as investments for future economic productivity. Press and Woodrow (2007) add to this argument.

An emerging construction based on the notion of childhood as a vehicle for and site of consumption, infiltrating policy and practice in early childhood education

and care. This construction has the potential to normalise policies, practices and pedagogies derived from a commercialised view of childhood (childhood as a commercial practice) and brings with it potential risks to the wellbeing of communities and children (p. 313)

Of importance here is how children are positioned within the discourse of the marketplace of ECEC. Peters (2001) cited education as an important arena for promoting national economic advantage and future national prosperity. Key to this paradigm is the 'responsibilising of self' (Foucault, 1991, cited in Peters, 2001) whereby individuals are positioned according to their potential to make future contributions to society, and education settings are assessed by their accountability for certain external outcomes designed with such contributions in mind. Embedded within this responsible self is the facility of choice: Choice is often used to imply action or individual responsibility for action (e.g., he made 'bad choices') and discourages or discharges social responsibility for marginalised groups such as those with disabilities.

Further emerging from neoliberal discourse is an image of an ideal individual which Peters (2001) describes as an entrepreneurial self and referring to this child as a 'superchild'. Peters (2001) suggests this entrepreneurial self embodies a shift from a culture of dependency (on the state) to one of self-reliance. The development of future citizens who have the means to provide for themselves economically with minimal cost to the state is a key feature. This discourse of self-reliance is characterised by and promotes personal agency with regards to physical and intellectual achievement, self-actuality and the accumulation of goods and finances.

Kaščák and Pupala (2013) raise germane discussion that within discourses of childhood, neoliberal discourses are encouraging a particular conception of childhood by way of developmental theories which enable entrepreneurial logic to be applied to the ECEC sector: "Children are being shaped into so-called knowledge workers" (p.

319). As mentioned earlier, developmental theory is based on the belief that development is linear and ascending. The relationship between neoliberalism and developmentalism is complex in that individualism implies a uniqueness which is valued by neoliberalism, yet developmental theories suggests a norm from which children can be declared to deviate. Organising ECEC on this premise of neoliberal individualism creates a homogenising image of childhood which creates risk for disabled children. “The norm is therefore no longer a (developmental) norm but has become a norm to exceed the norm” (Kašćák & Pupala, 2013, p. 324).

The notion of homogenised childhoods further invokes the idea of Ferguson’s (1990) ‘mythical norm’. The mythical norm of any context emerges as a result of dominant views which create both centre and margin and from which specific ‘others’ can be declared to deviate (Ferguson, 1990, cited in Graham & Slee, 2008; Lyons, 2012; Slee, 2011). Foucault’s (1979) writing of the ‘norm’ explains how the norm circulates between the disciplinary and the regulatory and in the case of education is linked to specific standards valued as part of the trajectory of educational achievement. It is likely then that the marketplace of ECEC has embraced the role of preparing preschool children for the next step in the ‘norm’ pathway as a marketing tool appealing to parents of typically developing children. Evidence of this approach, which draws on the discourse of developmental theory, is shown in the following example drawn from a google search of ECEC advertisements using the search term ‘preparation for school’.

We have a ‘Fabulous Fours’ programme for 4-5-year-old children, which focuses mainly on literacy and numeracy for smooth transition to school. Our programme is comprehensive, skill-based and designed to prepare children for their first year and on-going success in school.

<https://www.littletoetoes.co.nz/news/news-story-three>

The positions available to disabled children become increasingly limited within this linear and ascending discourse. Keeping in mind that inclusion is a legislated right for disabled children in Aotearoa New Zealand, Purdue (2009) cites examples drawn from her doctoral research such as management informing whānau of the inability of the centre to accept children with disabilities, whānau being required to pay for extra support, and teachers delaying entry on grounds of unpreparedness for working with disabled children. Many such experiences are also reported in the Australian research of Grace et al. (2008) who cite examples of families waiting up to a year for confirmation of enrolment after a 75% rejection rate based on similar responses from childcare centres. Essa et al.'s (2008) research also noted teachers' perceptions of preparedness, especially prior learning, was a strong predictor of inclusion of children with disabilities. While such responses may be underpinned and reinforced by limited notions and models of inclusion such as those realised through contested resourcing mechanisms focused on individual difference (Haynes, 2005), it might also be considered that the dominance of neoliberal goals and structures in the sector generally is impeding the progress of inclusion by limiting the positions available.

As earlier mentioned, ECEC as business investment opportunity (Goodfellow, 2005; Kilderry, 2006; Lyons, 2012; Penn, 2013; Press & Woodrowe, 2005) has become the dominant view (and voice) of the sector. Several authors have suggested that the relationship between legislation, policy and resourcing for inclusion in the Aotearoa New Zealand education system requires further examination in the light of investment opportunity developments as there is much to suggest that the intent of Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation for inclusion cannot be easily realised when juxtaposed with the 'economic viability' values prevailing (Ballard, 2004; Davis, 2007; Lyons, 2005.). This tension between privatisation of the early childhood sector and wider social goals has been raised frequently (Goodfellow, 2005; Kilderry, 2006; Sumsion, 2006) and is germane with critical writing about the compulsory sectors of education. Inclusion in the ECEC sector, viewed largely as a social goal, has important considerations for the success of Early Intervention (E.I.) for disabled children. In the

next section, Early Intervention as a specialist field is situated and discussed in the ECE marketplace as it is currently structured.

3.6. Implications for Early Intervention

For disabled children, play and social interaction are not only non-competitive and avoid normative assessment but also are viewed as critical to learning and future participation in society (MacArthur & Morton, 1999; Guralnick, 2008). As Skinner, Buysse and Bailey (2004) suggest, “of all the skills likely to enhance a child’s wellbeing and facilitate success later in life, the ability to interact in a meaningful way with one’s peers is probably one of the most important” (p. 194), and most naturally provided for in a play-based, inclusive setting. The play-based ECEC setting as critically involved with early intervention for children with disabilities is widely claimed (e.g., Carroll-Lind & Cullen, 2001; Mac Arthur & Morton, 1999; Ministry of Education, 2000; Press & Woodrowe, 2005). “The philosophy of E.I. is based on the premise of intervening early to avoid further developmental delays” (Carroll-Lind & Cullen, 2001, p. 7) and for disabled children intends maximising inclusive opportunities, taking advantage of typical learning experiences and environments and setting the occasion for the formation of peer relationships and friendships with a broader community of possibilities (Guralnick, 2008). In Aotearoa New Zealand, both E.I. teachers and ECEC teachers are responsible for facilitating and supporting the care and education of disabled-labelled children (Macartney, 2016). As an aside but of interest to this study, Macartney also reported that the M.O.E. does not collect information about how many families with disabled children are or are not accessing an ECEC service.

E.I. as a discipline usually involves a professionalised approach which can in practical terms involve what MacArthur and Dight (2000) described as a “truckload of professionals” (p. 40). Such a presence of adults can act as a barrier to social interactions for the disabled child. The E.I. professional is involved with (and resourced for) the identification of disability, difference or delay in young children and in most

cases, responsible for organising a support team including for example an educational psychologist, a speech language therapist, a neuro-developmental therapist, physiotherapist and so forth. Paraprofessionals such as an Education Support Worker (E.S.W.) are a likely addition if funds are made available. The paraprofessional is often unqualified.

The rationale for the presence of the 'truckload of professionals' working in the ECEC setting is largely built upon a biomedical model of disability as previously referred to by Mercer (1973, cited in Kearney & Kane, 2006). As Corbett and Slee (2000) noted, this approach to inclusion has evolved from a traditional special education framework, a technical approach involving finding solutions to problems through diagnosis by the expert professions, and subsequent remedial interventions. Unless early childhood teachers are able to challenge this biomedical approach to disability, the research findings of MacArthur, Dight and Purdue (2000) indicated children with disabilities may be considered different and not the responsibility of teachers in regular early childhood centres. This is a key concern of this thesis. The child is positioned as problematic and complex, the teacher is not viewed as the expert. This view is reiterated by Kearney and Kane (2006) who argue that defining disability as something inherent in the child (and with no regard for the part played by culture, environments and attitudes of individuals) will further absolve teachers from responsibility for working with the disabled child. Giangreco et al. (1993) commented that children do not attend early childhood services to receive support services: They receive support so they can participate in early childhood education and care. Research findings (MacArthur & Dight, 2000; Purdue, 2009) indicate that in situations where teachers and early intervention professionals are able to share an inclusive philosophy, share goals and respect for each other's professional skills a high level of satisfaction with the process is reported.

The importance of qualified teachers and sound initial teacher education for successful inclusion is claimed widely (e.g., Grace et al. 2008; MacArthur & Morton,

1999; Mohay & Reid, 2006; Purdue, 2009). According to a range of research (e.g., Miller & Cordova, 2002; Mohay & Reid, 2006), the greater the amount of training and experience in the area of childhood disability and inclusion, the more positive teacher beliefs regarding inclusion become. The Purdue (2009) research data reinforced this citing teachers' lack of knowledge about disability and teaching children with disabilities had not only affected the success of the process but also deterred families from enrolling their child with disabilities. That whānau were viewing teachers as unprepared is not surprising given that teachers are claiming lack of experience and preparedness as one reason for excluding children (Grace et al., 2008; Purdue, 2009).

Citing the need for training may on one hand be underpinned by an ongoing influence of biomedical discourse: special training for teaching special children promotes and reinforces the divide between same and different and, as stated earlier, affords teachers the choice to exclude. It is neither possible nor probable for initial teacher education to provide all the information on every type of disability, nor could teacher educators teach all the strategies appropriate for the inclusion of every child. Such teaching practice would also contradict current philosophy underpinning early childhood education in which the child is framed as a competent and confident learner and communicator (M.O.E., 1996; 2017) and as a unique individual embedded in, influenced by and contributing to one's own ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Most importantly, such training would further present disability as other; a deepening of classification that Foucault (1980) argued is the fundamental character of the norm. On the other hand, if teachers' reluctance to act inclusively is underpinned by a discourse of neoliberalism, it is possible that the power of neoliberalism is fortified by the biomedical discourse. The disabled child is positioned, by way of pathology, as an unsuitable fit for the neoliberal vision. In contrast the able child better fits the vision of the competent and confident learner and communicator central to the framework of *Te Whāriki*.

3.7. Literature summary

This chapter has drawn together evidence that there are several key forces and tensions which create subject positions for disabled children. Goodfellow's (2007) metaphor of 'childcare as a marketplace' invites researchers to conceptualise the forces at work in childcare provision generally and it is clear that children emerge as a commodity and are objectified within this metaphor: "Commodification reflects a view that care is treated like any other commodity where cost, price, availability and distribution are left to the workings of a free market economy" (p. 250). The marketplace invariably involves the notion of choice yet for the families of disabled children this has not emerged as the case. Choice of centre is limited to those centres that demonstrate knowledge of and willingness to engage with the intricacies of inclusion.

This chapter has noted complexities emerging from deficit- based and contestable funding regimes, and subsequent teacher self-perceptions of inadequacy. Juxtaposed social and economic intent have been cited as contributing to the current complexities with notions of self-responsibility emerging as embedded in current trends in education generally and serving to 'exclude' those who are not able to exercise this faculty. "Dispersed to the margins is the 'improper child'; the 'at-risk' child who comes to be described in deficit discourses and targeted with equity programmes" (Graham, 2007, p. 210).

As aforementioned, the majority ownership of childcare in New Zealand lies in the hands of business (Education Counts, 2012; Farquhar, 2008; George, 2007). In a flow-on effect, traditionally non-profit Kindergarten Associations, often the first port-of-call for whānau of disabled children, are now adapting to full-day childcare to compete. Further describing the changes to the sector over the past 30 years George (2007) states: "What started as a matter of social equity and found its expression in the

development of community-based childcare, is now fertile ground of profit accumulation “(p. 15). May (2008) added to this argument.

Commercial operators are able to set up and access public money wherever they see a business opportunity. There is no mechanism to ensure that responsive, community-oriented services are universally available. Low-income families, migrant communities, Māori and Pacific families and rural communities are those most likely to miss out (p. 303)

The childcare marketplace is complex and relatively unique in terms of usual neoliberal principles. Clients (whānau/caregivers) pay for emotional, social and physical care yet they are not the recipients per se. Aotearoa New Zealand whānau of ‘typically developing’ children were reported in an NZCER survey as being 93% satisfied with the care their child received with the most important characteristics of a satisfactory centre being affective and relational; happy settled children, warm nurturing adults and good communication (Mitchell, 2008). Conversely, whānau of disabled children both in Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia spoke of real difficulties gaining access to childcare with arguments based around economics and teacher preparedness (Purdue, 2009; Grace et al., 2009). Of relevance to Aotearoa New Zealand currently are the earlier questions raised by Heap and Ross (1992, cited in Peters, 2001) of the emergent enterprise culture in the U.K.

Will the encouragement of individual initiative and the free play of market forces succeed without an accompanying change in the culture? Can the public virtue of caring for those unable to care for themselves survive in this new order? (p. 66)

The literature examined in this chapter has unquestionably identified discrepancies between legislative intent and policy outcomes and raised increased

concerns for social justice and equity issues. The legislation to ensure inclusion for disabled children is struggling in a political, economic, and educational environment in which stronger market forces prevail. Overall, I believe the literature indicates a gap in the research undertaken in Aotearoa New Zealand and raises questions about how discourses positioning disabled children have gained or lost traction over the past few decades. This led to my decision to design a study intending to examine the subject positions made available to disabled children within the marketplace of ECEC by assembling the evidence of discourses situated within the wider contexts in which long-day ECEC is provided. How the study was informed and designed is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.1. Background.

The research questions (see Chapter Two, 2.7) indicated clearly that this would be a qualitative project. Creswell (2003) discussed the nature of qualitative research as interactive, humanistic and increasingly involving active participation by, and sensitivity to the participants: “Qualitative researchers look for involvement of their participants in data collection and seek to build rapport and credibility with the individuals in the study” (p. 181). The study planned to engage with teachers currently working in early childhood long-day ECEC centres to access their understanding of the circumstances and influences affecting the inclusion of disabled children, hence a qualitative approach was clearly appropriate. I was not interested in collating frequencies of acceptance or denial of enrolment, or in counting interactions between teachers and disabled children. This type of research interest would have favoured a quantitative approach which has been criticised as too reductionist in its approach to the study of human behaviour, thereby losing sight of the whole picture and over-simplifying human behaviour (Punch, 2005). My interest was in understanding how the discourses would play out in the language used by participants.

Fundamentally, qualitative research is interpretive; the researcher makes an interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2003). In qualitative research, as Miles and Hubermann (1994) noted, the researcher can attempt to capture data on the perceptions of local actors from the ‘inside’ through a process of deep attentiveness, empathetic understanding, and suspending or ‘bracketing’ preconceptions about the topics under discussion. In qualitative research the researcher must reflect on the ways in which her personal history may shape the research: “The personal-self becomes the researcher-self” (Creswell, 2003, p. 182). Creswell’s point was a meaningful reminder to me as this project was conceived out of my personal and professional understandings, experiences and concerns regarding inclusion for disabled children. Creswell (2003) also stated that qualitative research is typified by acknowledgment of

biases, values and interests (p. 182). To this end I acknowledged these openly with a clear statement of my position in Chapter One of this study, by sharing my experiences with all participants, and declaring an interest in furthering awareness of possible tensions surrounding the subject positions of disabled children in the sector.

The researcher paradigm, according to Kuhn (1970), is an implicit framework that defines legitimate problems, methods, and solutions for a research community. The qualitative research paradigm, as Ritchie and Lewis (2003) explained, aims at providing an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences and their histories. Expanding on Ritchie and Lewis's explanation, Denzin and Lincoln (2011) claim that the community of qualitative researchers is comprised of "those who are constantly challenging the distinction between the 'real' and that which is constructed, understanding that all events and understandings are mediated and made real through interactional and material practices, through discourse, conversation, writing, narratives, scientific articles, realist, post-realist and performance tales from the field" (p. X11). As this project was concerned with investigating the ways in which understandings about, and materialisations concerning disability become 'reality' or 'truth' in the ECEC sector, and how disabled children are subsequently positioned, a qualitative approach was necessitated.

Qualitative research covers an extraordinarily broad spectrum of methodologies and paradigmatic positions. This study takes an ontological position that reality should be questioned; it is not something for the researcher to discover, but rather it exists as a socially and discursively constructed entity. Truth claims therefore must be challenged. Hence, this project was never socially, politically, or even culturally neutral but was nurtured by a set of values and beliefs about disability, disabled people, inclusion and human rights at the time of its design. The decision to combine the work of Michel Foucault with reflexive commentary influenced by autoethnography is explained and discussed in Chapter Two (2.6).

4.2. Interviewing as method

In order to examine the prime questions, the study planned to gather data by conducting in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews firstly with owners and managers of long day ECEC centres, secondly with teachers in long day ECEC centres, and finally with a sample of whānau of disabled children. Interviews were a logical approach because as Jones (1985) quite simply put it: “in order to understand another person’s construction of reality, one would do well to ask them” (p. 46). The interview is one of the main tools of qualitative data gathering because it allows the researcher to access people’s perceptions and meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of realities (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Tracey, 2013). Kvale (1996) further described qualitative interviews as a ‘construction site of knowledge,’ however there were considerations and strategies to be addressed to ensure an ethical, productive and respectful experience of the process. These are discussed in this section.

There are several important reasons for using semi-structured individual interviews rather than a focus group approach. Firstly, in my experience as a lecturer and presenter about disability and inclusion, I have noticed a strong tendency on the part of adults in the early childhood profession to initially speak in positive ways about inclusion. The language of Aotearoa New Zealand’s legislation, policy and curriculum has proffered a way to speak comfortably about inclusion, but this project needed to look more deeply than ‘surface speak’. Semi-structured individual interviews were chosen over a focus group approach because, as Marshall and Rossman (2011) pointed out, when more than one person participates, such as in a focus group situation, the process takes in more information but there is a trade-off between depth and breadth. Punch (2005) further explained that the role of the researcher changes in a group interview with the researcher functioning more as a moderator or facilitator and less as an interviewer. Semi-structured interviews allowed me to move teacher, owner, and manager participants on from this and to use participant-specific probes. Secondly, the whānau participants in needed to be interviewed with a high level of sensitivity and

empathy: they are living the experience of disability as opposed to commenting on it. It was therefore important both personally, and for the purpose of the study, to be able to listen and watch carefully to ensure, as much as was possible, the emotional wellbeing of each participant. However, it was also important to manage that risk without attempting to protect the participant to the detriment of the project. Morse et al. (2008) noted that every interview comes with a risk: “No risk may mean avoiding the information that is likely to cause distress and that this approach may in actual fact deplete the value of the interview” (p. 200).

The semi-structured or guided interviews described in this project were based on the assumption described by Marshall and Rossman (2011) as fundamental to qualitative research: “That the participant’s perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it” (p. 144). Tracey (2013) argued that good interviewing is more than just asking good questions: “it is creating a logistically feasible and comfortable interaction that will encourage an engaging, honest and fun dialogue” (p. 159). As previously mentioned, I have had extensive experience of, and membership in, all three discrete groups involved in this project. I felt that my personal history as an early childhood teacher, the parent of a child with a (now discarded) label, and the previous owner of a long-day, for-profit ECEC centre could support the establishing of credibility and rapport with interviewees but might also raise challenges for the interview process. I wanted participants to feel safe and as relaxed as possible in the situation but needed to mitigate the likelihood of responses intended to ingratiate by demonstrating allegiance to the inclusion cause. This was of particular concern regarding the teacher participants as I could not disregard the fact that participants might have been aware of my role as a social sciences lecturer in teacher education and an advocate for disability rights. I was largely able to overcome this by using carefully considered probes which had been collaboratively designed, discussed and trialed with the two pilot interviewees (one manager and one whānau of a disabled child). As Marshall and Rossman (2011) claim: “The richness of an interview is heavily dependent on these follow-up questions” (p. 145). The pilot interviews proved really informative – the interview with a centre manager, who was also a trusted

colleague, allowed me to deeply reflect on my manner, the questions I had initially designed, and the type of responses each question might elicit. Her feedback provided opportunity to rethink the questions and consolidate ideas about developing probes. The pilot interview with a whānau member of a disabled child, who was slightly older than the children of participants, was enlightening particularly regarding supporting the emotional wellbeing of participants. Both pilot interview participants consented to have their transcriptions included in the data corpus however, the whānau participant contributions were not included based on two factors: her child was much older than the children in the study, and secondly, because the experience was situated in a sessional (part day) kindergarten. Her contributions helped guide the development of the opening interview questions.

I aimed to begin each interview in a very relaxed manner; however, my opening conversation would be slightly different depending on which of the three participant groups (teacher, owner/manager and whānau) each interviewee was a member of. To establish rapport with the owner/manager participants I drew attention to my past experience of holding a similar position to their own and explained that I lacked deep understanding (also true) of how inclusion is playing out currently in the sector. The aim was to be honest and respectful, to create a sense of trust and to cast each participant in a knowledgeable and informative role. I had anticipated this would contribute to establishing a sense of collegiality from the outset and a relaxed and productive interview conversation. A similar opener was used with the teacher participants adding that I was interested in discussing implications for and influences on teachers. With the whānau participants I intended to share a little about my personal background and explain that the study was about finding out what their perceptions and experiences were of the sector currently. I would explain their contribution to the overall project and thank them again for their willingness to participate. I wanted to make it clear that their input was being sought not as a way of verifying (or not) what teachers, owners and managers had said previously said, but rather it would contribute to data important in their own right. In three of the whānau interviews their child was present which also assisted in establishing rapport.

4.3. Description of the evaluative tools

The study uses a combination of thematic analysis (T.A.) and the previously discussed Foucauldian tools or strategies (refer Chapter Two). The study intended to examine the constitutive and disciplinary properties of the discourses at work in the ECEC sector but needed clear strategies for going about this. T.A. involves searching for themes that emerge as being important to the description of the phenomenon (Daly, Kellehear, & Gliksman, 1997). While Boyzatis (1998) characterised T.A. not as specific method but rather as a tool to use across different methods, Braun and Clarke (2006) argued that T.A. is a method in its own right. This debate was not of concern. T.A. is often, or appears often to be, what is simply done by someone without the knowledge or skills to perform a supposedly more sophisticated – certainly more kudos-bearing -‘branded’ form of analysis such as Grounded Theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). It has been criticised as affording opportunity for passive accounts of themes which ‘reside’ in the data (Taylor & Usher, 2001). That is, if one looks hard enough one might find them, expose them and that will be that. Undoubtedly this could be so, however, using Foucault as the main ‘thinker’ prevented this from being the case in this study. It was because of Foucault’s continued resistance to prescribing methodology that the study needed an evaluative partner to begin the work of examining the data. In light of Braun and Clarke’s (2006) claim that T.A. is not wedded to any pre-existing theoretical framework, it was acceptable to develop a working relationship between T.A. and Foucault for purposes of analysis. Braun and Clarke’s further claim that [within T.A.] researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitments, and data are not coded in an epistemological vacuum, aligned with the study’s earlier stated ontological position that reality is not out there to be known. Harwood (2000) warns of avoiding the positivist trap of essentialising the research method when working with Foucault, however, Graham (2005) asserts that this is different from being explicit about what one is doing: “Foucault is very precise and explicit (one could even say methodical)” (p. 5).

This project required clarity and transparency of explanation – I was consistently aware of the need to be clear about the means of evaluating the data, and for comparison and/or synthesis with other studies (Attride-Stirling, 2001). (Further

description of how this was undertaken is contained in 4.4.7). Fischer (2009) argues that Foucault offers researchers a challenge to precisely investigate the crossing of fields in relation to a particular problem or object. He claims that political issues are never disassociated from moral and ethical issues. As Braun and Clark (2006) suggest: "What is important is that the theoretical framework and methods match what the researcher wants to know, and that they acknowledge these decisions, and recognise them as decisions" (p. 8). T.A. is a useful tool for identifying and clustering threads and sub-thread themes across the data corpus thus raising awareness of discursive presence. Attride-Stirling (2001) provides suggestions about searching for these basic themes, organising themes and global themes which, while not strictly adhered to, offered the study a data analysis framework. Basic themes are simple premises characteristic of the data, and on their own they say very little about the text or groups of text as a whole.

The concept of functioning statements, drawing on the writing of Graham (2005, 2011), functions to link social processes together. Because the main questions are concerned with the discourses gaining traction in the ECEC sector, how they have come into being and how disabled children are being positioned, it is important to identify basic functioning statements before they are read as organising themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001). To explicate, according to Foucault (1972), the statement can be seen as the most basic element in discourse: statements are everywhere but cannot be described in and of themselves without being situated in a field of relations. It was therefore deemed useful to use T.A., to make the data more amenable to analysis, to cluster such statements in a more organised way. This provided initial insight into the ways in which particular discourses have become established and gained dominance in the sector. These themes can be interrogated using Foucauldian questioning and drawing in part from the work of MacNaughton (1998) who suggests that working with Foucault requires asking how were people being categorised, what social practices were giving meaning to those categories and what seemed to be the emotional meanings and investments in particular categories? Once basic themes (or clusters) are looked at in the light of each other, searching for patterns of emotional meanings and possible (dis)investment in discourses relevant to the context would be possible. In this study I remain mindful of Foucault's (1972) description of discourse formation as a "system of dispersion" (p. 37).

of dispersion, whenever, between objects, types of statement concepts, or thematic choices, one can define a regularity (an order, correlations, position and functionings, transformations), we will say, for the sake of convenience, that we are dealing with a discursive formation (p. 38).

4.4. Research design

The study is located in the greater Auckland area, Aotearoa New Zealand's largest city. This project began with a 2x2 design, involving interviews with four early childhood teachers and four ECEC centre owners (or their agents) drawn equally from for-profit or non-profit operating structures and using the same interview questions (Appendix 9) The centres were therefore selected purposively. As Silverman (2011) explains: "purposive sampling demands that we think critically about the parameters of the population we are interested in and choose our sample carefully on this basis" (p. 388). In other words, organisations, settings and individuals where the research questions were likely to be answerable would be required. The sample size was restricted for feasibility yet kept broad enough to afford opportunities for findings to be transferable. The depth of the interviews would be the focus rather than the size of the sample. Punch (2005) noted that given the debates about generalisation possibilities in qualitative studies, the concept of transferability is often preferred. Punch also discussed abstraction of concepts in the data analysis arguing that the greater the level of abstraction, the greater transferability of findings to other contexts. The Foucauldian strategies discussed earlier in this chapter complied with Punch's abstraction requirement and thus it was hoped that the conclusions drawn from the data corpus would likely be transferable in abstraction.

By drawing teachers, owners and managers from centres working under similar operating structures I intend that experiences and understandings revealed in the data would be transferable across a wider population of ECEC centres and staff working within similar operating structures. The ECEC centres, selected firstly by structure and secondly by geographical convenience, provides access to two teachers qualified and registered in Aotearoa New Zealand and registered teachers who were employed in for-profit structured centres, and two equally qualified counterparts employed in

community or non-profit centres. The reason for choosing to interview teachers employed in both for-profit and community operated (non-profit) ECEC centres was that there may be differences in how inclusion is articulated and practiced between the two types of context. Mitchell's (2002) reporting of evidence that owners and managers of privately-owned centres in the Aotearoa New Zealand ECEC sector had different spending priorities from community owned management, and that privately owned centres employed at that point in time the lowest percentage of qualified teachers was a consideration in the selection. As funding for inclusion, and for teacher education, had previously been cited as barriers to inclusion (refer Chapter Two) drawing participants from both types of operating structure was relevant to the project. Choosing not to interview teachers, owners and managers from the same centres was because this might inhibit either participant group from sharing openly of their views about practical, structural or managerial influences on inclusion within their own teaching context. Likewise, it was possible that owners or managers may view teachers as problematic in the process which potentially could inhibit open discussion of the research questions. Drawing participants from organisations operating multiple centres means it is possible to achieve this.

In addition, a purposive sample of whānau of children with disabilities was interviewed using a different set of questions (Appendix 11). The children of the whānau sample were not required to be attending any specific type of centre or be using a centre at all. If there were connections with a type of centre it was expected this would emerge in the interview process.

4.4.1. Owner, manager participant selection

The recruitment of four owner/manager participants (from four different sites) was purposive in that I deliberately selected types of settings and people for the important information they could provide that could not be gotten as well from other choices (Maxwell, 1997, p.87). Operational structure and geographical location were again considered. In the case of managers, guidance was sought regarding protocols for achieving site access consent from the individual or governing body responsible. The initial approach was made by telephone at which point I explained the project and clarified the organisation's protocols regarding site access and consent

(Appendices 2 & 4). An information sheet about the project was provided and participant consent forms attached (Appendix 1). Once I received the signed consent forms an interview time and venue was decided upon. All four owner/manager interviews were conducted at the participant's place of work during usual working hours.

4.4.2. Teacher participant recruitment

The selection of the four participants (from four different sites) for the individual interviews with teachers was also purposive. The teacher participant criteria required that a person be NZ qualified and registered and have a minimum of three years' experience in the sector. Given that the context for the project is Aotearoa New Zealand, knowledge of relevant policy and curriculum intent was needed. Priority was given to expressions of interest from teachers who have held a position continuously for one year or more in the centre where they were employed. I hoped that such a length of service would ensure participants had a depth of experience of their particular centre. The sample size was rationalised by the number of operationally similar organisations in the Auckland area, and the need to keep the data manageable. In the first instance I approached governing bodies (e.g., operations managers of larger chains, owners or the owner's agents in the case of franchised businesses, governing boards of community owned non-profit centres) for consent to site access for recruiting teachers as participants. This approach was made initially by telephone and followed up with an information sheet about the study and a consent form for site access (Appendix 12). The information sheet was posted, although the offer was made to deliver it personally if the person-in-charge preferred to meet and discuss the project with me. I approached the larger operators first as the data collected from teacher participants working in larger organisations could be considered to reflect the experiences of a wider population particularly in response to questions regarding the influence of structural procedures and practices. In total the study drew on eight ECEC practice sites (teachers/owners/ and managers combined).

I was granted site access (Appendices 12 & 13) to approach teachers employed by one large for-profit ECEC organisation and a smaller business operating two for-

profit centres. Site access was also granted for two community operated (non-profit) centres. Interviews took place at a time and venue of mutual convenience. Teachers employed in privately operated ECEC centres were interviewed in non-working hours in their workplace (e.g., lunch hour, after work). The teacher participants employed in non-profit centres were given release time for the interview. One interview took place in a meeting room at the centre and the other in a local cafe. All owner/managers were interviewed in their offices.

4.4.3. Parent/caregiver recruitment

The recruitment of six whānau (parent) participants was also addressed purposively via disability support agencies: 'Parent to Parent', and the 'Parent and Family Resource Centre' (Appendix 7). I approached the generic support agencies because I did not want to involve only one disability group. Both 'Parent to Parent' and the 'Parent and Family Resource Centre' engage with whānau of children with a range of disabilities. I understood that the sample of whānau was not necessarily representative of the wider population but hoped that where similar ideas, experiences and ways of speaking were present in several transcripts I would be able to generalise to an extent. Also, I felt it likely that by drawing on current literature, and the data sets from teachers and owners, hypotheses may be drawn about possible discursive influences affecting the inclusion of disabled children.

The initial contact for attracting parent participants was made to the coordinator of two disability support agencies by telephone to ascertain protocol

requirements for their organisation. In the first instance I asked Parent to Parent for permission to place an information letter about the study and researcher contact details for expressions of interest placed in the e-newsletter (Appendix 7). The project's criteria for participants required they be the parent/caregiver of a child with disabilities aged between two and six years and live in the greater Auckland area. An informal discussion with the coordinator of Parent to Parent was arranged to ensure that the information letter read appropriately for the reader base. The advertisement was duly placed and received no responses. The process was repeated with the Parent and Family Resource Centre and nine mothers replied by email or telephone. These expressions of interest were followed up by telephone and suitable participants were sent an information sheet and consent form (Appendix 5). Among the responses were two whānau of much older children who, while they understood the criteria, wished to have their voices heard. These contacts have been retained for a future study. I also verbally requested that each participant write a brief background for the researcher including details such as family structure, employment if relevant, age of their child, type of early childhood service attending (if any) and any other details they wish to share with the researcher. All of the whānau participants were interviewed in their own home.

4.4.4. Introducing the manager and owner participants

Here the owners and managers who participated in the interviews are introduced. They are named with pseudonyms of their own choosing. In the case of both teachers and owners/managers, their ECEC centre is named using a species of tree (e.g., Oak Tree Centre). A description that is sensitive to ethical concerns around retaining confidentiality of each centre structure is also included here.

Petunia

The first manager participant is known by the pseudonym Petunia in the project. Petunia was a qualified and very experienced early childhood teacher. Petunia held the

position of quality and compliance manager for a nationwide chain of for-profit ECEC centres referred to in the analysis and subsequent chapters as *Kauri Tree Company*. Part of Petunia's role was to develop policy to guide the company's practices under licensing criteria laid down by the New Zealand Ministry of Education (M.O.E., 2008).

Nancy

The second manager participant is referred to as Nancy. Nancy was the owner and founder of *Willow Tree Company* which at the time of the interview was operating ten for-profit centres, nine of which were in the greater Auckland area.

Phyllis

The third manager participant was a qualified and experienced manager of a non-profit centre known in the study as *Rimu Tree*. *Rimu Tree* centre is one of three centres operated by an Auckland community-based trust board.

Louise

Louise was the director of a hospital affiliated, non-profit centre which caters for a large number of children and operates more than one age group licence. This centre is referred to in the study as *Rata Tree*. Louise was the pilot participant for the owner/manager group.

4.4.5. Introducing the teacher participants

The teacher participants are introduced below.

Lisa

Lisa was employed as a qualified teacher in a non-profit, community-operated centre. The centre is referred to as *Kowhai Centre*.

Sonia

Sonia was employed as a qualified teacher in a non-profit, community-operated centre. The centre is referred to as *Totara Tree*.

Sally

Sally was employed as a qualified teacher in a for-profit centre operated by *Kauri Tree company*.

Nina

Nina was employed as a qualified teacher in a for-profit centre which is part of a larger organisation. The centre is referred to as *Titoki Tree*.

4.4.6. Introducing the parent participants

The parent participants are referred to in the project by a self-selected pseudonym, as are their children where relevant. No information about the specific pathology of any children's disability is made mention of beyond saying that all of the children connected with this project were recognisably disabled.

Helen

Helen was an experienced primary school teacher who, at the time of the interview, was staying at home to care for three-year-old Charlie. Charlie attended a local play centre with Helen several times per week. (NB: Playcentres are "parent-led early childhood centres which offer high quality education for children in small mixed-age groups. Playcentres also offer free parenting and early childhood education for parent members" [<http://www.playcentre.org.nz/>]).

Joan and Kurt

Joan and Kurt were the whānau of Maree. Joan was an at-home parent, and Kurt was running his business from his home office. Kurt joined the interview unexpectedly and signed participant consent post interview. Maree was coming up five years old and her whānau were making plans for her transition from a local Montessori sessional centre to school (a sessional centre differs from long day ECEC in that children attend for only part of the day).

Rebecca

Rebecca was an at-home mother and the parent of three-year-old Campbell. Rebecca is a qualified and experienced early childhood teacher and had worked for various disability organisations prior to having Campbell. Campbell attended a sessional centre also.

Vicky

Vicky, a qualified accountant, was mostly an at-home mother who occasionally did some private accounting work from her home office. Her daughter, Josie, had recently turned five and begun to attend primary school. Prior to transitioning to school Josie had attended Playcentre alongside her mother.

Kate

Kate, at the time of the interview, was working part-time outside of the home in her health-care profession and had a nanny in her employ to look after the care of Zoe aged four years and her two-year-old sibling. Zoe had not attended an ECEC centre.

4.4.7. Post interview data analysis

As I approached the analysis of the data collected, I oriented my thinking towards the questions: which discourses are gaining traction in the sector, how is this happening and how are disabled children being positioned within discourses? As Fadyl et al. (2012) suggest, the key to robust research utilizing Foucault is to apply his work appropriately to the focus of the enquiry and to make sure that there is coherent connection with his theoretical and philosophical aims. This section explains the strategies and approaches applied to the data generated in the interviews.

After the interviews were completed, I was left with approximately 20 hours of audio-tape recordings. These were transcribed by two dictaphone typists who had signed confidentiality statements prior to beginning the transcribing task (Appendix 8). I acknowledge the point put forward by Bird (2005) that doing one's own transcribing should be a key phase of data analysis, however, time constraints prevented it in this case. At the time of the interviews, all participants were given the opportunity to access, review and /or alter their contributions. This offer included a copy of the audio recording. No participant wished to do so.

In the first round of analysis, I listened repeatedly to the tapes while reading the transcripts and made adjustments where the transcriber may have heard incorrectly. I noted descriptively important features such as humour, sadness and assertive tones that were not apparent by merely reading the text. In this first reading, I also made notes about pauses in speaking, self-corrections such as when a participant appeared hesitant (possibly about the terminology or how best to explain [or not] their thoughts), points where the tape had been paused to allow a participant to collect themselves, and where the interview had been interrupted by a child.

In subsequent readings I also noted my own thoughts about how and where contributions might fit into the discourse analysis. Detailed notes of recurring statements and the reasons they added to *my* interpretation were maintained throughout the process even though I was aware that a different person would be unlikely to bring forward the same interpretation. Any evidence of clusters of statements indicating a dominant discourse were also colour coded. Graham (2010) argues,

Although not ‘scientific’ this approach can be a powerful analytical tool, particularly in an applied field such as education. Through the experience such analysis provides, it is possible to come to a different relationship with those truth/s which may enable researchers to think and see otherwise, to be able to imagine things being other than what they are, and to understand the abstract and concrete links that make them so (Graham, 2010, p. 666).

I was also interested in ‘silences’ and pauses evident on the tapes. What was being ‘unsaid’ and what discourse(s) were possibly giving or denying permission. Foucault (1978) discussed silence -the thing one declines to say, or is forbidden to name, and suggested that silences are an integral part of the strategies that underlie and permeate discourses. These descriptive notes were collated separately, and the tapes and transcripts were revisited and reconsidered by listening and reading the text and tape either side of the pauses. Chapter One (1.5.1) outlines a genealogical history of the pathway of neoliberalism into the ECEC sector. This genealogy provided me with clues

as to why present discourses are as they are, and which might alert me to statements, silences and pauses that could be traced to dominant discourses in the data. Put simply, wherever similar phrases, statements or omissions could be collected to seemingly form a discursive theme I returned to the tape and the transcripts to look for evidence across the data set.

What came to light by way of the analysis of the interview transcripts is contained in the following two chapters. Chapter Five is the first analysis chapter and reports, analyses and discusses the contributions of whānau of disabled children. I made the decision to separate the early childhood professionals (teachers/owners/managers) contributions to the study from those of the whānau of disabled children out of respect for the families whose experiences are lived rather than merely reflected upon by others.

FIVE: THE WHĀNAU/FAMILIES: “Inclusion just makes disability ‘normal’”

In this chapter, having worked through the data using a Foucauldian lens, the discourses underpinning the experiences, struggles and learnings of four whānau of disabled children are gathered together to argue that these children are positioned as ‘other’ in their early years. What Foucault (1981) termed ‘discursive practices’ work both in inhibiting and productive ways, implying a play of prescriptions that designate both exclusions and choices (Hook, 2001). The chapter draws together the research data brought into being by way of interviews with whānau of disabled children. I was interested in uncovering the ways in which complexities of inclusion are understood and experienced by whānau of disabled children. I was committed to gaining a deeper understanding of the ways in which discourses of disability might influence the lives of whānau living with a disabled child and how the child is positioned within these discourses. Participants were asked to share their understanding of the rights of disabled children, ideas about the benefits and drawbacks of inclusion for all children, and for their own child specifically. The interview questions began with a more a generalised question (Appendix 11) about inclusion and moved into specific-to-whānau experiences and ideas about inclusion for their own child. Here I hoped that their experiences would indicate the extent to which the discourses operating in the ECEC sector were manifesting in the lives of others.

I also asked whānau for their thoughts about any problems or tensions that they considered ECEC teachers, owners and managers might experience relating to inclusion. Finally, they were asked to make suggestions about what could change in the sector to make inclusion happen and what they hoped for, for their own child. The responses to these questions afforded me the opportunity to examine the subject positions made available as they were being experienced by whānau who have intimate knowledge of both disability and the ECEC sector. The participants openly shared their personal views and experiences about accessing ECEC for their own child. The parent interviews were at times quite harrowing for both interviewer and interviewee. Sadness, anger and frustration were threaded through the parent contributions. My personal experience as both a parent and a teacher, manager and

owner to some extent played a role in mitigating upset however I felt that whānau in the main wanted to share their feelings regardless. They wanted to talk.

The chapter is structured in six subsections with each section addressing a mostly different but occasionally overlapping perspective of inclusion. The following subheadings present whānau' views on knowing children as people first, access to ECEC, viewing children differently, confusing yes/no discursive trend, other barriers to inclusion, and what we want for our child/ren.

5.1. Making disability 'normal'

As a starting point for the whānau interviews, I was interested in establishing an understanding of the ways in which whānau viewed inclusion in long-day ECEC as a general concept rather than specific to their own child. I wanted to get a better sense of the reach of the discourse of children's rights to access amongst whānau. To this end, I began by asking Rebecca, mother of 3-year-old Campbell, her thoughts about disabled children going to regular ECEC settings.

Rebecca: They should be allowed to go to any early childhood service that is local to them and that they choose to send their child to. And I think there's a lot for both parties to gain from that: Both the children with disabilities and the children without. It's about learning to care for each other. Schools bring in tokenistic programmes about caring for others or learning about disabilities but when there's actually children there with disabilities, it's just natural – it's not something that needs to be taught. If you've got the attitude that challenges can be addressed when they arise, then you're going to be able to address them. If you see them as problems, then you're never going to be able to.

Kurt, father of 5-year-old Maree, also responded that inclusion is beneficial.

Kurt: Maree's disability doesn't define her; She is Maree and kids can learn to know her as a person – first and foremost she is Maree. There are so many

grownups who feel totally uncomfortable when they see someone with Maree's disability. They don't know what to do, what to say, how to act. If you know from your childhood, then you will not be so awkward.

Charlie's mother, Helen, responded similarly to this question about children attending ECEC by stating quite firmly.

Helen: The world will not change necessarily for him unless you put him out in the world. Once he's out in the world mindsets will change. I do believe that – yes - once people see past the label and the fear of the label which is often just a fear of the unknown.

And again, Vicky, explained her views about the benefits of inclusion.

Vicky: [inclusion] just makes disability normal. People are different and people learn in different ways and children can learn that from the word go. They are not people to be looked at in a funny way: It's good for both the other kids and for the child with disabilities. It makes disability normal. I remember going to the shops with my sister when I was a child. My sister was in a wheelchair and the shop keeper would talk to me – I would say "talk to her not me, she's the one with the money". That's one of things I want for Josie – just that she will be treated like part of the community and accepted as part of the community

These responses are a clear indication that in the main, whānau are totally aware of the nervousness that many people feel when confronted with disability. Vicky's comment that people spoke to her rather than her disabled sister was an indication that at that time there was a nervousness about communicating directly with disabled people. Kurt's view that people don't know how to act around disability, and Helen's direct comment about fear of disability all point to awareness among whānau that their child will be seen as different from the outset and that their differences rather than similarities were explained as underpinning this. Whānau participants were also very clear in the thinking that if their children are not included this will not change. In

the main, the whānau explained the barriers to inclusion for their child originated in lack of community exposure to disability and therefore was encouraging people to draw on discourses which are largely based on the pathology of disability. As such, attitudes towards disability are discursive in origin and based on a knowledge that positions the disabled child by way of deficit. This is consistent with Slee's (2011) writing about attitudes positioning the disabled child as the problem and therefore as the object of other people's attitudes. Attitudes grow from dominant discourses albeit that they are expressed as personal views.

Kate, when asked about her views on inclusion, responded quite differently.

Kate: Inclusion depends on the needs of the child. Zoe's needs are very complex, and she can't learn by interacting with the environment. It [inclusion] has to be based on the needs of the child

This response exposed Kate's view that the sector is not well-placed to meet the needs of children such as Zoe. Kate showed a personal concern for Zoe rather than an overview of the benefits of inclusion generally. While the majority of the whānau responses were actively in favour of children being educated and cared for together, Kate's concerns about Zoe's needs not being met are likely held by other whānau of children with complex needs. This highlights tensions around the notion of inclusion as an overarching philosophy that has not moved on to the pragmatics of practicing inclusion. It seemed that Kate's view was based in part on Zoe's complex needs but to some degree on the belief that the sector would not be prepared or resourced to cater for her.

5.2. Who is out and who is in?

To follow up on the responses in the previous section I asked whānau to explain their knowledge of their child's right to access ECEC and participate as part of a group. I was interested to know whether whānau had knowledge of the intent of the legislation

(refer Chapter One) and if so, was there a relationship with the comments highlighted in section 5.1.? I began by asking Kate about her understanding of Zoe's rights under the legislation.

Kate: I know she has the right to attend but if I wished to put her in a mainstream centre, they would need to cater for her needs, but I wouldn't because they don't.

Viewing the ECEC sector as ill prepared and under-resourced is a more subtle indicator of the power of a pathological discourse that can result in exclusion. Kate clearly understood that all children have a right to be educated and cared for together. The combination of a social constructionist approach to disability (refer Chapter One), backed up by policy such as *The NZ Disability Strategy*, juxtaposed with 'difficult to negotiate' and contestable funding regimes, contributes to unease amongst whānau. When disability is pathologised for funding reasons and the funding is inadequate to meet the needs of the child in order that they may access their rights a clear message is given to whānau as Kate's next comment demonstrates.

Kate: It's not their fault, it's a fault of the system that doesn't allow for the extra hands needed to cope with a child such as Zoe

When a child is identified as disabled through a complex funding regime, their needs rather than rights are the focus, and their deficits rather than their competencies are underlined (Lyons, 2012). Yet the legislation and policy of Aotearoa New Zealand clearly implies otherwise.

Rebecca articulated her knowledge of the legislation and policy regarding the legal rights for disabled children:

Rebecca: *The Education Act* states that any child is entitled to any educational provision on the same grounds as any other child.

LLM: Do you realise that the Act doesn't extend to ECEC?

Rebecca: Yes, but I've been told that ECEC is covered by the *Human Rights Act*

LLM: So, what you are saying is that you understand that Campbell has every legal right to go?

Rebecca: Yes.

Rebecca followed her explanation of Campbell's right with comments that resonated with the work of Graham and Slee (2008); those on the inside have the power to make the decisions about who are allowed in to join them. I learned later in the interview that Rebecca had studied to be an early childhood teacher and, prior to having Campbell, worked for a specific-to-disability organisation.

Rebecca: I wish people wouldn't think of the inside – who's in and who's out – it's about everyone belonging. It's just about finding out where the child's at and pushing them along. It's about getting past that barrier so that teachers can see that, rather than trying to get the support in place before you say you'll have them. I think it's about believing they belong or not believing they belong. It doesn't matter if you've studied specialist subjects – what matters is the attitude.

Foucault (1977) suggests that power produces reality, and that power must be analysed as something that circulates or functions much like a chain, is of relevance here. Rebecca points out that she is aware of the power that people hold over Campbell's access and participation. While she describes this as attitudinal, as settled ways of thinking or feeling about something, attitudes are described at points throughout this thesis as discursive in origin and therefore far more complex than a centre merely not being welcoming or confident to include.

Rebecca said she believes when people see a disabled child, they just see the disability not the child. She questioned whether this could be traced back to initial teacher education (ITE).

Rebecca: Maybe there's a problem at the level of the training college. Maybe it's not taught well, and I would say that more than half the teachers do not actually believe that every child can attend their centre. This is sad. If you've got the attitude that the problems or any challenges that arise can be addressed, then you are going to be able to address them. But if you see them as problems then you're never going to be able to address them. Actually, the most important thing is remembering that the child has a right to be there and then you can work out what the support needed is and go with that.

Hastings and Oakford (2003) noted differences between the attitudes of pre-service teachers and in-service teachers, finding that pre-service teachers with higher educational qualifications displayed more positive attitudes than in-service teachers towards including students with physical and learning disabilities in their classroom. This is likely due to a wider influence and acceptance of human rights/social justice discourses in ITE programmes. Yu and Park (2020), in a review of earlier research about teachers' attitudes to disability, reported that teachers with positive attitudes toward inclusion are more likely to act positively toward students with disabilities than other teachers who expressed negative attitudes. de Boer and Munde (2015) further noted that positive attitudes carried over into children's attitudes towards disabled peers, particularly young children's attitudes which are greatly impacted by the attitudes of the significant adults (e.g., parents, teachers) in their lives. Yu and Park's (2020) own research, however, indicated that only 14% of teacher participants thought that initial teacher education courses influenced their attitude towards disabled children. They found that direct contact with disabled people was the largest influence.

5.3. Looking at it differently

In this section I group together participant comments that demonstrate shifts in thinking and acting that arise from parenting a disabled child. Moreover, the comments suggest that whānau believe they have a role in shifting the attitudes of others. These comments were not in response to a direct question per se. I drew upon the responses

to earlier questions. The nature of semi-structured interviews for this research encouraged participants to speak in a less structured way with thoughts and ideas appearing naturally as was the case here. An important thread emerged about whānau' perceptions of their role in shifting the attitudes and actions of others,

Helen: I try to lead by *my* attitude – I don't keep him as a precious boy

Helen is alluding here to her responsibility to introduce Charlie the community so that others might perceive him positively. Helen is a primary school qualified teacher and Charlie the youngest of several siblings. It seemed very important to Helen that Charlie could join the community even though she wanted to keep him close. Vicky, speaking along the same lines as Helen, mentioned she had come across an educational pack sent to schools. She described this pack as an attempt to shift the way people speak about disability. It has been put together by a specific disability association:

Vicky: It's all about the language and how you talk about disability. You're not supposed to say disability, you say people with differences. You're supposed to look at it from a social perspective not a health perspective. It says that the health (medical) model is a dangerous one because you categorise them (the children) as having something wrong. It's supposed to make people think differently without getting up their noses.

This is clear evidence of the social construction model of disability in action: Vicky agreed with the approach and it is clear from the earlier comments (refer 5.1) that other whānau in the study did too. The social construction model of disability posits that the child is disabled by society which subsequently impinges upon access and participation by creating communities that are not accessible to everyone. As Fenech (2016) explains, the social model of disability conceptualises disability as separate from impairment, as something one experiences as the result of societal experiences as previously discussed in Chapter Two. Positioning the child as disabled by society is

viewed positively by the whānau in this study who are attempting to gain access for their child. Vicky was excited about learning of this model.

Vicky: The thing is that I've had to tell myself off as well. I think, shit, I didn't know that - I didn't think of that. They have phrased it much better than I have but it's just the whole thing of.... Well, we've got to shift our perception and that's really what I've got to do.

It seemed that Vicky had found a new way of thinking and speaking about Josie's disability – a person-first discourse that takes the focus off the individual with disability and shares the focus with the community. The discourse of social constructionism comes across here as hopefulness.

Vicky: If people can view disability differently inclusion is more likely perhaps?

LLM: Why do you think people struggle with this?

Vicky: People are frightened. They don't know how to act because they haven't been around them. Its normalisation – that's the key to making an accepting, loving society.

The tape was paused at this point and I did not attempt to refocus Vicky on the interview questions for several minutes. It was a very honest, sad and heart wrenching part of the interview. It saddened Vicky to think that her child might provoke fear in others. After a break Vicky tried to explain her grief to me. I chose to highlight only one point from her explanation.

Vicky: The hardest thing for me was having Josie when our family is highly intelligence focused. Having a child with intellectual disability was actually quite tricky for me. I was dead scared I wouldn't be able to love her.

The interview had prompted a resurfacing of grief about being the parent of a child with intellectual disability. She had been placed in a role she had not anticipated.

McKeever and Miller (2004) link such grief with social stigma, stating that distressing emotions are recognised as ‘understandable and predictable responses to widespread societal discourses that devalue persons with disabilities’ (p. 1178). Vicky was aware that intelligence is a highly valued attribute in society which may also explain her earlier mentioned enthusiasm for the social model. After a few minutes Vicky came back with what I interpreted as a coping comment.

Vicky: It’s an awful thing to say about having a child, a different child, is that you’re out of that bracket – the whole competitive thing of... ‘oh my child can read’ and it takes a bit of the pressure off

Vicky’s comment was also captured in Tabatabai’s (2020) study where the views of mothers were described as resistance narratives. Tabatai’s research studied mothers’ views in the light of neoliberal discourses.

Recurrent grief about developmental milestones appeared to be sitting just under the surface for each of the whānau participants. Tabatai’s research findings (2020) note that society also measures a mother’s success as a parent by their child’s success. To achieve success in society, the parent is measured against their child’s ability to be self-sufficient and independent. Independence is contingent on milestones being achieved.

The comments in this section demonstrate that whānau were aware that their disabled child will be considered problematic by many ECEC services. Teacher practices give clear messages of this stance to the whānau who do not make subsequent approaches in many cases. Unsurprisingly, parent participants were aware from the outset that their child would be categorised by their deficits rather than their attributes.

5.4. Saying yes but meaning no (Yes/But)

This section explores several experiences of whānau attempts to access ECEC for their disabled children. Here I include excerpts that point to a confusing discursive trend that implies welcome with a ‘but’ attached. In my initial analysis I referred to this as the Yes/But discourse trend, subsequently renaming it ‘enlightened ableism’ which is explained later in this section. There are several underlying reasons for this which are further discussed in Chapter Seven.

The whānau participants, except Kate, revealed that the discourse of safety and compliance predominant in the sector currently, is sometimes used to ally whānau with teachers in their decisions not to place children in long-day ECEC. The whānau are welcomed using the language of inclusion and then encouraged to think with caution about the suitability of a specific centre.

Rebecca: I find that childcare centres will emphasise their fear which is not necessarily a risk, it’s their fear of something happening to the child. I’ve had people say: “Oh he’s so little and the four-year-olds will knock him down”. They will put that fear on to the parents and that is why the parents won’t send them. If you can’t keep him safe, then I can’t leave him. They often end up having made allies of the parents because they’ve put fears into them, and so parents think they’re (ECEC) doing the best they can, but they just can’t provide a safe environment.

Clearly, this is evidence of whānau made complicit in decision- making based on an expressed concern for a child’s physical wellbeing put forward by teachers, owners and managers. Two parent participants identified this practice but had not challenged concerns put forward about safety because they viewed them as an indication that their child was perceived as problematic, and subsequently not welcome.

Rebecca's comment can be read as characteristic of the discursive movement of enlightened ableism (Lyons, 2013): that a person holding the power in a situation, presents as caring and supportive of inclusion yet employs a strategy almost guaranteed to avoid taking responsibility for the child with disability. The parent is made complicit in the decision not to enrol their child. Further and quite dire consequences of the power of this discourse, whereby the rhetoric of inclusion is used to clothe a message of exclusion, was made clear by Rebecca.

Rebecca: When we can't go to work because teachers don't act on their obligations, they push us into another place: A place where we can't work or run a business; a lower socioeconomic place

Rebecca further informed me that they had sold property to fund her staying at home to care for Campbell. Helen, mother of Charlie, similarly felt the economic impact of being a stay-at-home mother. I was told that one of the participant's husbands had given up his business to assist with raising their child, while another, Kurt, had moved his office into the home. Vicky also added that she thought it would be a lot harder for parents who needed to be in paid work.

While I did not feel that it was appropriate to discuss participants' financial situation, three parent participants in the study volunteered comments alluding to financial challenges. Two had managed to continue with careers on a part-time basis working from home. This confirms the findings of Russell (2003): "The absence of affordable and appropriate childcare for disabled children is a major factor in the financial disadvantage experienced by many families" (p. 218). Here it is acknowledged that the whānau in this study may have offered to participate because they were in a position to do so (at home during the day). This could be attributed to financial status at the time the data was collected and may have impacted on the findings specific to this research.

5.5. Looking for the obstacles

Next, I asked participants their thoughts about any other influences or features relevant to the success of inclusion that may be having an impact on inclusion in ECEC. Kate spoke immediately about funding for additional support.

Kate: Fourteen hours of teacher aide support per week is not enough for a child with complex needs. Zoe can't go to the environment – the environment needs to be brought to her. So, unless she is being interacted with pretty much 100 percent of the time, she is not getting what she needs to move forward.

Kate also mentioned that Zoe's nanny was planning to take her to kindergarten for mornings but the whānau pay the nanny because the GSE funding didn't cover that cost.

Rebecca similarly raised the issue of inadequate support funding for her son Campbell.

Rebecca: The most the government funds [for Campbell] is three hours a day, but the centres are only interested in accepting an enrolment if the child is fully funded.

Access to funding for teacher aide support is an ongoing problem both for whānau and for teachers, owners and managers, as Chapter Six discusses more fully. Shuker and Cherrington (2016), report findings from a NZ survey of ECEC, noting issues regarding difficulties timely and adequate support from agencies: Timely access to support from GSE, long waiting time for assessment and extreme frustration when children fall just below level for accessing support. Shuker and Cherrington also noted those services which were able to access support such as an Education Support Worker (E.S.W.) often felt that the allocated hours were insufficient.

Structuring a centre by age group, (and government funding structures), was raised by three whānau. As mentioned in Chapter One, most long day centres are divided into age groups with different funding rates accorded and this emerged as a major concern for whānau participants. Helen felt that age group structures create problems for children who are developing at a different rate. Helen had chosen to use Playcentre as the appropriate option for Charlie.

Helen: At Playcentre the children are all mixed in together so your child, perhaps with a special need, won't be put in a room where they're not the right age for the room. Sometimes he's with the older boys and they have dug a trench – he can experience the water. If he was with the younger children, they wouldn't have dug the trench in the first place.

I wondered whether Playcentre, where the mother stays with the child, was also Helen's way of introducing Charlie to community while ensuring he was protected.

Vicky also took Josie to playcentre.

Vicky: The way Playcentre works, the whole inclusion and interaction with the 'olders' and 'youngers' is really good. And it gave her more of a sibling-type environment which is what she needed and for me, the support from other mums was brilliant. Playcentre is much better for parents. It's like the Māori model – working together.

Joan and Kurt put forward a similar concern about their preschool being divided into age groups and that the transition for Maree was very lengthy. They were also concerned that the older children were much bigger and stronger than Maree but also acknowledged her need for a peer group. Joan and Kurt had gained a place for Maree in an ECEC magnet centre (a centre that is known to be accepting of disabled children) and, then a year one classroom at their local school. They had gained confidence and so had Maree.

Joan: Now Maree is good at saying 'no' and this guides the other children. They help her unpack her lunch now.

Developmental discourse was mentioned in Chapter One as a likely barrier to successful inclusion and it appears that the policy to fund by age group for ECEC services reinforces this as previous comments suggest. There is a funding band for mixed-age services but there are fewer centres structured in this way. Usual ECEC centre structure is that, depending on a child's age, and drawing on related discursively produced assumptions about age-related skills and abilities, fewer teachers are employed as a child gets older. As Gunn (2019) notes, the size of the group may change, the ratios of teachers to children, the nature of the curriculum and associated teacher strategies may alter. Gunn also points out that architects, in the design of ECEC centres draw upon developmental discourses to design spaces based on normative and stereotypical assumptions about child development. Teachers are trained to build on learning so that children can reach their potential, but potential is measured against what society values at a given point in time. Within a developmentalist discourse, teachers' purpose is to progress the children in their charge from one point to next. As Gunn (2019) contends, within developmental psychology discourses, the child is constituted as the sum of various developmental domains. The child is therefore viewed by their learning potential in the mind of the teacher and when challenged to view potential differently, problems are imagined. Over time, there has been subtle shifts in the discourse of developmental psychology, by moving some of the power from teacher to learner. However, the term 'learner', particularly in neoliberal discourse, implies potential and progress which has implications for disabled children (refer Chapter One).

Helen also highlighted the age-group divisions as a key reason for her choosing to take Charlie to Playcentre (parent-led); it is inclusive and does not divide children by age. Parents mainly stay and play with their children. Helen gave a specific example of the playcentre, mixed age setting as preferable.

Helen: But you see, as a parent, that stages in children's play can last longer and therefore your child will fit in, where your child's at will overlap with other children – sometimes older, sometimes younger. He's got older children for his language development. I went to the local kindergarten and the whole session only one teacher interacted with the children. Well, that's not going to help a child who needs language development. I chose to stay at Playcentre because mums naturally talk to children – no child is left disengaged. And you have immigrant children, we have a deaf mum, other special needs children. And your child won't be put in a room where they're not the right age for the room and they can be with younger children.

Rebecca contributed a similar comment.

Dividing up the centre into specific age groups has led to an expectation that at certain ages children will behave in certain ways and therefore a child who doesn't behave in those ways is not always welcome in that room. And thinking they can just set up a room for this narrow little group of people who are going to be between this and that point

Next, I asked all whānau participants except Kate about their feelings and experiences approaching a centre with a view to enrolment (Kate had made her views about not including Zoe in ECEC clear earlier in her interview). Several spoke of feeling saddened that the child who they love might not be welcomed for the unique person they are.

As Rebecca stated.

Rebecca: I would actually be horrified at the thought of cold calling to enrol him because I couldn't bear for him to be rejected.

Vicky did approach her local ECEC centre to enrol Josie.

Vicky: I went along and talked to them and they said they don't start children until they're two. They said they would ring me. They never rang and Josie's 5 now. A second centre told me they were all teacher-aided out.

For a centre to explain that they were "teacher aided out" seemed to imply that they had many disabled children attending and that all had support workers with them. It also seemed that such a comment was implying that children such as Vicky's daughter, Josie, would need to have a teacher aide in situ before they could access the service.

Rebecca explained that, rather than approach a centre directly, she had contacted Campbell's early intervention teacher to find out which centres would be likely to enrol him.

Rebecca: I know that's a bit of a cop-out, but I didn't want to... I didn't want to turn up to a place where they didn't really welcome my son. Having said that, although we've chosen a magnet school for him, I'm also doing a visit to our local school. And the reason I'm doing that is because I just don't really believe that I should avoid that completely because I do think that one school needs to know that actually there are people out there that do require that support, and for another thing, it our local school and my other son went to it.

To avoid feeling unwelcome, Wylie (2000) notes that whānau of children with disabilities have tended towards magnet centres. The fear of being made to feel unwelcome is still very strong and the magnet centre still offers a safer means of access to ECEC. Playcentre came across in the data as such a service. As earlier mentioned, (see Chapter One), 'magnet centres' is a now common term for ECEC centres that accept a greater-than-usual share of disabled children. These centres may have many disabled children attending at any one time but are often not best suited to whānau' employment needs because of location, part-time hours of operation or the requirement that parents stay with their child. Magnet long-day centres are extremely rare, and I knew of only one at the time of this data collection. Grace et al. (2009) expressed similar findings from their Australian study in which whānau reported that

finding a centre willing to enrol a child with disabilities was so difficult that they were forced to accept any terms or conditions that were offered.

Next, the study explores participants' ideas and aspirations for their child in the long day ECEC sector: The interviews with whānau in this study were designed to provide an overall picture of how the intent of the legislation for inclusion was manifesting in the experiences of whānau. The study investigated how discourses are positioning disabled children, and whether there are currently additional challenges to progressing inclusion was a key focus.

5.6. The aspirations

Towards the end of each interview, I asked each participant a question about the aspirations they held for their child. I hoped to build a picture of whānau ideals that might contribute to understandings about the influence of discourses and ways that this could be challenged. I asked Rebecca what would be great for Campbell.

Rebecca: I just want him to be learning alongside other children and have a programme that's appropriate for him. I want him to be part of small groups where he's able to learn independently and supported with skills.

About his daughter, Maree, Kurt said simply.

Kurt: I want her to be happy, to have friends.

Throughout the interview, which Kurt joined unexpectedly, his comments were mainly succinct and to the point. He gave the impression of being in control of his emotions, yet his comments were often evocative. Here Kurt became more talkative, adding a comment about Maree at her ECEC centre.

Kurt: We want Maree to be part of the community. That's what we appreciate and that's how we've done it. Even though the children are different in their development compared to our daughter, she's a part of that group and that

must be good for her. And it's forced the other children, maybe forced isn't the right word, but it's taught them to look after her.

I asked Kate about her hopes for Zoe.

Kate: Well at the end of the day, parents always want what's best for their child and if you think they're going to offer something better than a public special unit, you'll send them there. It's something we're looking at. We've spent so much damn money on everything else it would probably work out the same. You could send them somewhere like [Name of Centre] (a preschool for children with physical disabilities) or stick her in a mainstream school and not get support. [Name of centre] draws a lot of money from its own trust. She goes one day a week to [Name of different centre] (a licensed and chartered early education centre for disabled children aged from birth to 6 years of age) but that's all because there are too many children and they can only take 30 at one time.

Kate's remarks showed her frustration and anger with the systems associated with support for disabled children generally and for Zoe in particular. This was very evident throughout the interview. I picked up on Kate's feelings of helplessness. Both parents were working, there was a toddler in the house and a nanny. Kate did not sit for the entire interview.

I asked Helen about her hopes for Charlie's future.

Helen: I want most of his schooling to be mainstream and inclusive but at some point, he will have to join his community because it will be safer for him.

I assumed here that by community, Helen was referring to a community of disabled people. This comment contradicted Helen's earlier comments about getting Charlie out into [regular] community so people could know him. I wondered whether the 'not keeping him as a precious boy' notion would only extend so far.

Next, I asked Vicky what she would like for Josie.

Vicky: People need to recognise that the parents are under a lot more stress; a different sort of stress, a new set of pressures apart from the normal parent pressures, that need to be acknowledged and acted upon. Part of the reason for having children is to watch them grow and develop and celebrate their successes – and you know - sometimes it hard.

This comment emphasises the real challenges for parents attempting to build community for their disabled child. As Vicky's comment above shows, the stresses for whānau are real and their disabled children need to be acknowledged and welcomed as recognised members of regular communities and regular ECEC centres should they so choose. These challenges are further discussed in the next section.

5.7. Discussion

The 'findings' in the whānau participant data set largely position disabled children as outside of the long day ECEC sector. Further clarified is the presence and effects of an enlightened ableist discursive trend (refer Chapter 1.9). The whānau who had attempted access to long day ECEC were in the main greeted with the human rights rhetoric of the legislation and policy followed by conflicting messages originating in discourses of neoliberalism and further reinforced by developmental theory and biomedical discourse. The embeddedness of such a discursive predicament is shown to be contributing to ongoing stresses for whānau which in many cases present as economic, social, and educational. The data reported in this chapter indicate that having a disabled child in most cases places whānau in a range of difficult situations

which can be ameliorated to some extent if local and welcoming long day ECEC is made readily available.

The data brought to the fore in this chapter have also demonstrated that the subject positions of whānau, particularly mothers in the case of this study, are impacted by a range of discourses that position them differently to the whānau of typically developing children. Furthermore, discourses surrounding disability conflict with the gender norms associated with parenting generally. The myth of the perfect mother is consistently challenged yet remains powerful in neoliberal society (Warnes & Daiches, 2011) however, the presence of disability in the whānau invites a different whānau positioning whereby the disability itself can occupy the major status. While the cultural narrative of neoliberalism idealises independence (Tabatabai, 2019) this may or may not be achievable for the disabled child yet in society, parenting is viewed as successful when it is done independently and when it produces children who are, among other things, independent, regardless of their ability (Kane 2016; Mendez 2008). When disability is taken as a simplified, biological, and undesirable monolithic fact of the body, what disability really is and really can do is limited by these historical configurations (Fritsch, 2015). Yet in this study, all whānau participants had put up some measure of resistance to the dominant discourses positioning both themselves and their own children, even creating a different 'storyline' whereby their life was easier because they didn't have to compete with other whānau over their child's achievements.

The data in this chapter clearly indicates that dominant discourses of developmentalism, neoliberalism, and biomedicine are serving to create greater problems for families than needs be. The marketplace economic model which is characterised by low ratios, contestable funding and the influence of deficit-focused, historic perceptions of disability toward disabled children have conflated into a discursive trend evidenced in this chapter which is hindering progress for inclusion. The discursive trend of enlightened ableism presents here as a confusion of neoliberal purpose, human rights rhetoric and an entrenched attachment to developmentalism in

the sector. Whānau want to feel welcome yet have been greeted with opposition albeit dressed up in inclusive language. Or, they have 'read' the signs and refused to approach centres.

In this data set, participants claimed the virtues of inclusion by noting the positive benefits for the children, their peers, the whānau and the community, and spoke strongly of the need for positive attitudes in teachers. They were also aware of the barriers and tensions for ECEC professionals in the sector as it is currently structured. It was also apparent that whānau expected more of the sector than they were currently receiving and, in most cases, were prepared, albeit nervously, to advocate for it. It is possible that acting as an advocate is an aspect of parenting that aligns with an ideal that fits within the neoliberal expectations of parenting. Thus, as Tabatabai (2019) suggests, advocacy reinforces the idea of taking personal responsibility which speaks to a certain level of choice, a principle of neoliberalism.

Advocating for one's child is considered here using Gallagher's (2008) explanation that power is taking actions over actions. Gallagher was drawing on Foucault's (1983) thoughts on power as being a mode of action which does not act directly on others. It is about doing not having. From this stance, power is understood as something that is exercised, not possessed. Gallagher (2008) argues,

As 'actions upon actions', power also animates many more mundane, everyday practices. Indeed, beneath the monolithic appearance of corporate and governmental decision making, one finds that such decisions are powerful only because they are implemented by vast networks of people (service managers, administrators, politicians, civil servants, teachers, social workers, classroom assistants, children, parents, community workers, and so on) through their everyday actions upon one another (p. 400)

This chapter shows that whānau feel that the networks, such as those Gallagher (2008) speaks of, are failing to advocate and act on their behalf. Most whānau participants showed understanding of the subject of human rights as contradicted by the subject of

economic interests. They were keen to have their children viewed as human rights subjects and were frustrated and angered by the economic subject position attributed to their children.

The study was principally interested in how discourses compete for privilege over each other and how disabled children are positioned within discourses; this chapter demonstrates how disabled children have become discursively positioned as a problem for the culture of ECEC as the discourse of neoliberalism has infiltrated and become powerful in the sector. Foucault argued that subjective experience is created by constantly changing social and cultural conditions and circumstances (Walshaw, 2007) and this data shows evidence of disabled children, and subsequently their whanau, are positioned as 'other' with the social and cultural conditions of the time.

The following chapter, Chapter Six, presents findings and discussion drawing on the data created via interviews with teachers, owners and managers in the long-day ECEC sector.

CHAPTER SIX: THE TEACHERS, OWNERS AND MANAGERS: The 'yes' and the 'but'

This chapter claims and explicates a discursive predicament in the sector. The chapter draws together and discusses key themes emerging from the teacher, owner and manager data set about understandings, beliefs and experiences of inclusion for disabled children. In these data I specifically sought evidence of discourses that might promote or hinder access for disabled children. This research was committed to investigating how discourses influencing teacher knowledges and practices were aligning with or destabilising current legislation and policy intended to support access and participation for these children (see Chapter Two).

The interview questions (Appendix 10) were designed to firstly elicit data to provide deeper understandings about teacher experiences and learning about disability and inclusion and their understandings (both personal and professional) about Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation for inclusion. Secondly, the interview questions aimed to explore teacher experiences of inclusion for disabled children and bring forward their views about possible barriers to inclusion. As earlier explained (see Chapter One), access and participation in ECEC for disabled children is protected by a suite of legislation and the focus of this thesis is to gain deeper understanding of whether policies are being implemented as planned, and if not, to consider possible gaps and remedies.

As in Chapter Five, the emerging themes are presented in subsections with each section pointing towards a different but occasionally overlapping perspective of inclusion from the set of teacher, owner and manager participants. The study began with the aim of discovering how teachers had learned about and experienced disability and inclusion. Interviews explored evidence of cohesion or disjuncture between prior learning and the legislation for inclusion that would indicate the influence of a number of discourses (see Chapters One and Two).

6.1 Knowing about disability and inclusion.

This part of the study begins with an excerpt from an interview with Sally, one of the younger teacher participants in a for-profit chain of centres.

Sally: In my second year of university, I did tutoring for three children with autism. And I recently started helping at Sunday school and they've got a little boy with Down Syndrome. They make his mother stay with him even though it's the only hour in the week that she gets to be without him. I thought that was really sad and interesting. And that would affect his spirituality as well.

Sally shows here her early commitment to working with disabled children, within a setting that suggests a Christian ethics commitment. Sally appeared to feel considerable empathy with the mother ("make his mother stay", "really sad"). Sally's standpoint on disabled children and inclusion was quite clear from the outset. Sally came across as committed to the idea of children being educated together and used the person-first language promoted by the social model of disability (refer Chapter 3.2) throughout her interview. I thought initially that perhaps this was a result of the papers she had completed in her degree. However, it stood out because in other interviews people had used a range of specific-to-disability labels such as autistic or Down Syndrome, the term 'special needs', and differentiated between physical, neurological and intellectual disability. I subsequently realised that I had used a person-first discourse in the phrasing of the interview questions although the more political term 'disabled children' [persons](Oliver, 1996) has been employed in the writing up of this work. Perhaps I felt at the time that person-first phrasing would be a more benign approach to use with strangers? Either way, while I acknowledge that while this may have influenced the responses from Sally, it is unlikely to have carried much weight in the findings overall. Most participants used disability-first phrasing from the outset.

Sally's initial comment where she had mentioned being 'sad' about the disabled child having restrictions placed on his attendance at Sunday school, presented a conflict between Christian discourse and the moral ethos displayed by many churches in

western society. Morality, as explained as doing good or right, is situated as an aspect of one's identity. Yet in the case of Children's Church, Sally was confused that this was not playing out in practice. Investigating Christian ethos, Colby and Damon (1995) state three characteristics of extraordinary moral commitment in everyday life: first a certainty, or exceptional clarity about what is believed to be right, and about the personal responsibility to act on these beliefs; second, a positivity of approach to life involving optimism and enjoyment of work; and a unity of self and moral goals, in conceptions of identity. Sally's comment indicated a connection between the morality of inclusion for disabled children and such an ethos. I was intrigued that Sally felt that excluding this child from Children's Church would, in her mind, affect his spirituality. I chose not to question her about further about this matter to avoid becoming an ear for Sally's religious convictions which held little relevance for the purpose of this study.

In an interview with Lisa, a teacher in Kowhai Centre (non-profit, community operated) I asked her how she had learned about disability and inclusion.

Lisa: A lot of it is from the media. There is a lot of coverage to do with disability. I think there is more awareness so now they tend to cover it a bit more. And probably from my studies.

LLM: Did you pick up any messages as you were growing up?

Lisa: As a child going through school and stuff you see physical disabilities. You are very aware of children aren't able physically, who can't run. And working in a centre you are more aware, you know, of signs of disability, not so much as being blind but things that lead up to it.

Lisa's comment about children who are not physically able and cannot run could be clearly read as pathological/medical discourse. She seemed to be remembering her childhood experiences – a time when biomedical discourse provided the only subject position available to disabled children. Lisa's comments about being more aware of signs of disability most likely comes from putting her knowledge of child development into practice as an assessment tool.

Next, I interviewed Nina, a teacher in a small for-profit centre. Nina became qualified after relocating to Aotearoa New Zealand. I followed the same line of questioning about her knowledge and experiences of children with disabilities.

Nina: To be frank, not very much. I'm not very confident. When I was doing a paper at [name of institution] I came across inclusion. And I was working in a centre at the same time which had a few of them [i.e. disabled children] so I was a little taken aback because in [home country] we never came across any of these. They were there, like a part of things, but the special people would come and give the treatment. They were there but there wasn't a name for it. So, I asked the centre manager why these children were there, and she said, 'we include'. Inclusion was a new word for me.

It appeared that in her home country, Nina had seen children with disability in the same centres and schools, but they were not the responsibility of the regular teachers. While Nina had seen this practice in her home country, it is likely that other teachers have only experienced disabled children with support staff present as Chapter Five reported.

The same question about knowledge and experience was posed to Sonia, a teacher in a non-profit centre, about her knowledge of disability and inclusion. Sonia had also relocated to Aotearoa New Zealand and completed her ECE study post arrival.

Sonia: I was a counselling psychologist. So, I've got a background in learning disabilities and stuff. I've got my degree in counselling psychology from [home country]. When I came here, I worked as a reliever at lots of different places and saw special education; you know, helpers helping children.

Sally, Nina and Sonia demonstrated an understanding of inclusion as, in part, a charitable action (e.g. "helping children"). Charitable discourse position is the helper and the helped in a relationship within which the helper is the privileged position (Fulcher, 1999). While the charitable discourse is employed by these teachers,

knowledge of the rights of the disabled child was also demonstrated. There is an indication of discursive predicament whereby teachers see the child through a deficit lens, understand the rights of the child to attend, yet concurrently experience disability and inclusion as a good deed.

My first interview with a centre manager was with Louise, the manager of a non-profit centre. Louise was the pilot interviewee. I began by asking her about her experiences with disability, and her views on inclusion in long-day ECEC centres.

Louise: I went to school next to a home for disabled children. I suppose I was aware of people that needed help and that the law didn't always assist. And my father's role-modelling because he was interested in everything and everybody

Louise moved on to talking about her feelings about inclusion with being prompted.

Louise: I am appalled when I hear that children have been excluded based on what they can and can't do. We are an open home/open centre. I recall a child with multiple issues who wasn't expected to live very long. Mum needed to get out of the house and she wanted him to experience being amongst other children, not that he has any language or sight. The memory I've got is her being in tears because we lifted him out of the wheelchair and put him in the sandpit. He just lay in the sand.

LLM: How do you see disabled children being part of the group?

Louise: But they are – we are all part of the group. The thing is we're not all the same and some of us are not able to do some of the things that others can. It's no good saying that we're all treated the same because we're not. You have to put more energy into some aspects.

Louise is very clear here about her views on inclusion and the view that diversity is part of the human condition. Disabled children, in Louise's comment, are presented as requiring more energy but, nevertheless, included without exception.

Next, I asked Petunia, a policy and compliance manager with Kauri Company, the question about her experiences with disabled children and views on inclusion.

Petunia: In my first teaching role we had a high number of children with special needs; we had at least five children with special needs at any one time and I guess from there it never really went away. It has always been a passion. When I was a head teacher, we always kept the number (of disabled children) capped at five. You can do a disservice if you have too many children. I am one hundred percent for inclusion.

Here Petunia shows how the presence of children with disabilities in her first centre as influential in her teaching career.

In contrast, Phyllis, the manager of a non-profit, community service, responded to the question about experience and views on disability and inclusion by referring to bringing in disabled children from a specialist disability facility, and subsequently returning them to this facility.

Phyllis: When I first started teaching in ECE, the primary school next door had a special class so we enrolled the children with disabilities in the kindergarten, into the normal programme, and had very strong links to the special class at the school.

LLM: What are your views on inclusion today?

Phyllis: I preferred the old way

LLM: Which was?

Phyllis: Special schools, but that's my personal opinion. Full day centres like we operate are targeted towards working whānau and we haven't had anybody with severe disabilities because I don't think mothers, and this is the sad thing, I don't think mothers or both whānau can go on working if they have a child with severe disabilities. I don't know whether the conclusions are that it's better or it

is not, but I don't think we have experimented enough. At the end of the day it should be the parent's choice.

Phyllis's comments overtly positioned disabled children as 'outside', as not belonging in the centre. She described disabled children pathologically, and the physical nature of the centre was described as a barrier and she viewed whānau as bearers of the responsibility for care.

The next interview was with Nancy, owner/manager of the Willow centres. Nancy explained that her knowledge about disabilities came from her exposure at the centre; with whānau wanting to enrol their children. Nancy went on to describe her experience with children to demonstrate.

Nancy: Molly was very badly autistic. We also had one little girl who is Down Syndrome in our [place name deleted] centre. She's gorgeous ... she's quite a big girl and you know they're gorgeous and got all that love, but they can sort of bombard other children ... and they are full of joy and they're always smiling.

Nancy's comment drew on the biomedical discourse for knowledge and appeared to be relying on this discourse to inform her practices. She was also drawing on pathological discourse ("badly autistic") which implies that one *is* one's disability and is synonymous with the generalised traits applied to persons with specific disabilities. Being "gorgeous and full of love" is usually viewed as an advantage in life yet when it is applied to a whole group without individual relationships it becomes pejorative, particularly when accompanied with verbs like "bombard" which suggests that the attention is excessive. I argued in Chapter One that there is renaissance of the pathological/medical discourse in the long-day ECEC sector which aligns with neoliberal free-market discourse. It allows for the repositioning of disabled children based on the extent of the disability as evidenced in Phyllis's earlier comment about ECEC being inappropriate based on the extent of the disability. The following comment by Nancy, also indicated the inclusion would be contingent on the extent of the disability.

Nancy: We had one little girl who was so severely physically disabled that for

her to be in our care wasn't appropriate but that came through with our consultation with the whānau. We just didn't have the facilities and she would have had to have one on one lifting her off the wheelchair and on to the toilet

Later in the interview Nancy commented about consultation with whānau.

Nancy: We're not in opposition – we are both (the centre and the whānau) actually educators and I feel we need to have a quite a consultation period with the whānau before enrolment. It's actually about sharing the knowledge and understanding and yes, they may pick up and go with it if they want.

This is not usually what happens for other children and Nancy's comments indicated criteria would be used prior to the child gaining access. I gleaned here that the power would sit with the organisation rather than the whānau of the disabled child in this consultation process.

Nancy: We had one parent who had a boy who was autistic, and she [the mother] took him to Melbourne and there's a wonderful guy at Melbourne Children's Hospital and there was some wonderful technique he was using with children and it was a lot of work. She stopped being a lawyer for a whole year to dedicate to her son. You become an advocate and that to me is what you need to be doing.

In both Chapters One and Two I made mention of the financial stresses of parenting a child with disability. The work of others in the field (Essa et al, 2008; Mohay & Reid, 2006; Parish & Cloud, 2006) indicated that the families of disabled children were finding access to long-day ECEC increasingly difficult and many are experiencing straightened circumstances as a result. There is a disjuncture here between what Nancy perceives as advocacy and what others might read as desperation on the part of the mother of this child. Nancy's sharing of this anecdote in an interview presented as something of a contradiction. This research was committed to understanding more clearly the ways in which teachers, owners and managers construe their responsibilities under the legislation. This is illustrated and discussed in the next section.

6.2. Feelings about disability and inclusion in Aotearoa New Zealand's centres.

This section contains remarks and discussion about teacher, owner and manager perceptions of inclusion. I expected to get a sense of the discourses influencing their views on including disabled children. I begin this section with the teacher responses to the question about their feelings about inclusion.

Lisa: I think children with disabilities or special needs should be in mainstream centres mainly because they get to interact with children that are more able. It gives them something to work towards. I think that's more of more my personal view.

Nina: Children need to work alongside children with a variety of needs because they [the other children] are the future whānau, and the whānau of children with special needs, so if they don't have any contact, they won't learn about them.

For Lisa, inclusion is seen here as motivational for the disabled child, and for Nina, preparation for the typically developing child. Both views are characteristic of the many arguments for inclusion. *Including Everyone: Te Reo Tātaki* (M.O.E., 2000), one of Aotearoa New Zealand's guiding documents for inclusion, promotes inclusion as a way of reducing fear and as teaching children to value diversity. Nina's use of the term 'special needs' again could be read as employing charitable discourse. Using the term 'special needs' is more than a word choice; it evokes an image of the child as needy and positions the disabled child as requiring additional assistance. The term 'special needs' is evident in policy such as *Special Education 2000* and *Te Whāriki (1996)*, both

of which were guiding documents when many of the teacher participants studied for ECEC qualification. Corbett (1996) argues against the sentimentality of the term 'special needs' to explain disability. Corbett claims that 'special' when attached to 'needs' implies "dependency, inadequacy and unworthiness" (p. 3) and reinforces the need for special support. Support, however, is linked to provision rather than the people and takes us further from a focus on inclusion.

Nina used a metaphor to explain her views.

Nina: Everybody has to accept what everybody is because it's like all five fingers – all different but all together. We don't chop off a finger, but we do give it special care.

They're allowed to be here – their right is here. I'm from [name of country] and everybody has a right to be who they are.

Nina seems to be emphasising disability rights as fundamental for all humans.

I asked Sally about her feelings about disabled children being included.

Sally: I think that we should, um, rather than, (pause) I don't see why we shouldn't just include them.

LLM: Are there children with disability attending this centre?

Sally: No, I'm all set to go but where are the children?

While teachers knew that inclusion was mandated but did not have specific knowledge of the legislation, the centre owners and managers demonstrated clearer understanding of the intent of the legislation however they did not mention any item of legislation or policy specifically. I asked Petunia (policy and compliance manager with Kauri Company) about her knowledge of the legislation and policy for inclusion of disabled children.

Petunia: I write the policy so it's pretty good.

LLM: Does your organisation have a policy for inclusion?

Petunia: I will not have a separate policy, in fact some centres (in Kauri company) had them and I made them take them away – that's how strongly I

feel about inclusion and inclusion doesn't separate children. I believe Te Whāriki and the actual licensing criteria talk about providing a programme for individual children's needs and abilities; from disability right up to exceptional ability and I refuse to highlight one group of children.

Given the lack of a company policy as described by Petunia, I asked about guidance for teachers.

LLM: Where would teachers in Kauri Company look for guidance?

Petunia: Under the curriculum. We have a curriculum procedure policy which is basically the licensing criteria which covers centre requirements, so they must meet that and by meeting that we are offering inclusive practice.

Petunia's view that teachers would find a framework to guide their practice in licensing criteria is an interesting standpoint. Petunia has responsibility for the how the company approaches their obligations under the legislation for inclusion and she has elected to rely on *Te Whāriki* as discussed in Chapter One. This is mandated for all licensed centres yet contains limited reference to 'diverse ability'. The Licensing Criteria for Early Childhood Education services, to which Petunia was referring, states in its seventh criterion: "The service curriculum is inclusive, and responsive to children as confident and competent learners" (M.O.E., 2008).

LLM: What are your thoughts about disabled children being accepted in the wider community?

Petunia: I think there's still a lot of work to be done in society and I think that children need to work alongside children with a variety of needs, disabilities,

personalities or whatever. They are the future parents of children with special needs.

Next, I asked Phyllis (centre manager, non-profit) about her understanding of the legislation and how she felt about it.

Phyllis: Under the law they [disabled children] have a right to access, and they should be able to access but the requirements of children with disability, and because of the needs of those children, there isn't enough funding from the government to meet those needs. The problem is that if centres choose to take children with disabilities then the cost of that, and there is often a cost, must be built into the parents' fee structure. Across all the parents.

LLM: Does this centre have a policy about inclusion?

Phyllis: No, we don't have a specific policy, but we do have an equal employment opportunity and we have had staff with disabilities but we don't have a specific policy for children; we just treat each child individually as they make their application.

As in Willow centre, it seems that disabled children are assessed by the management of Rimu Centre for their suitability according to Phyllis. This assessment is based on perceived deficits and the individual child's cost effectiveness. In the next section, participants were asked to explain any issues they felt impinged on inclusion.

6.3. Examining the barriers for teachers, owners and managers

Throughout the interviews, participants referred to funding and economics generally as barriers to moving forward with inclusion. Government, centre structures and initial teacher education/professional development were also made mention of as possible barriers. The teacher, owner and manager concerns are examined separately as they arose in the data but discussed as capillary to dominant discourses in the conclusion to this thesis.

6.3.1. The money

I begin here with a comment from Sally who, when asked about barriers, thought that in her current centre there would be structural and financial implications.

Sally: I guess the only barrier I can think of is ratios. I don't know if they [disabled children] would be safe in an environment with 1:8 (one staff member to eight children) and I guess the centre might need to employ another teacher just to cater for that child

LLM: Why do you think that would be an issue?

Sally: Funding.

LLM: Why would funding be an issue?

Sally: How we are structured. Our centre is quite big, and we split them (the children) into two, three, and four-year olds and each room has 2 teachers. We have a shared outdoor area.

I found this response very interesting with its suggestion as a discursive signpost. Sally was unable to provide greater clarity on why the structure of the centre was related to funding, possibly because she was a fairly recent (3 years) graduate and had not yet been introduced to the intricacies of the funding model of ECEC. However, the comment demonstrates knowledge that the structural issues of group size, ratios and play space feature strongly in the daily lives of teachers. Funding and structural concerns point to the influence of the sector as a marketplace. The neoliberal structuring of the sector as a site for private investment has been discussed (see Chapter One) and Sally's comment pointed to how a centre can be structured to ensure maximising use of staffing and minimising cost. Ratios are regulated for a minimum standard. It is commonplace to refuse to raise staffing numbers because it limits economic viability.

Sally's alluding to supervision and safety was a recognisable discourse. Risk and safety discourse are very prevalent throughout society. Furedi (2005) writes about a

movement away from the term 'accident', noting that the British Medical Journal (BMJ) has banned the word from its pages. BMJ's argument takes up the notion that most injuries and their precipitating events are preventable. In response, safety regulations are detailed, safety policies are embedded in every workplace and whole industries are built around being safe and healthy. This is a recognisable feature of the ECEC sector's approach to safety and accident prevention. Unsurprisingly, the ECEC sector has stringently regulated safety standards (New Zealand Government, 2008.). It is entirely appropriate to be concerned about the safety of children but using safety as a means of denying access to disabled children did not align with the curriculum's intentions and Sally's earlier comments.

Lisa was also aware that money was an overriding consideration in the day-to-day operations of a service:

Lisa: I probably won't be sure, but you know everything has a financial connotation. If you want to do professional development for special needs, money could be an issue to allow teachers time for these sorts of things.

Lisa was referring here to the cost of employing a reliever to give teachers paid release time. Lisa also referred to a lack of opportunity, because of financial constraints, to meet with teachers from other centres to share ideas for inclusive practices.

The economic issues/barriers became more apparent via the centre manager/owner views about possible barriers to inclusion.

Louise: It can be hard to accommodate children who have multiple physical limitations, you know, that big child who needs to be lifted and changed

I asked Louise what she thought needed to be in place to make inclusion more workable.

Louise: The availability of someone to work intentionally with that child. We spend a long time fighting to get it [funding], sometimes 12 months to get three hours a week. There are too many children and they (GSE/Group Special Education) must prioritise, but if we are looking at increasing participation and improving quality then it's not by being the ambulance at the bottom of the cliff. And GSE used to be conveniently based just around the corner and they used to run free workshops

When I posed the question about possible barriers to inclusion to Petunia her response was two-fold.

Petunia: There is not enough work done on the early education (Initial Teacher Education) side of their training, so staff need to be mentored by those who have been around for some time. Struggling centres would have less-experienced staff. And they feel that don't get enough support from GSE (Group Special Education, Ministry of Education). And we can put in additional support but only for a limited time like two weeks because of staffing costs.

Petunia states her position here quite clearly, and it seems firmly underpinned by a neoliberal discourse. The disabled child emerges as non-cost effective and expensive within a neoliberal business platform. Reflecting on this comment raised a question about her earlier comment about it being appropriate to include five disabled children in a sessional public kindergarten, where teachers' salaries are paid directly by a government department. I found the disjuncture in Petunia's reasoning intriguing. It appears it is not possible to do the same where a market model directs expenditure. This is further structural evidence of a discourse that clearly positions disabled children as costly thus privileging business objectives. I wondered whether the fact that teacher salaries are paid out of the funding allocated to each privately-operated centre to use as they wish contributed to exclusion.

When Nancy was asked about barriers to inclusion she replied.

Nancy: It's the Ministry's fault that we have got too many centres. They are everywhere, just like corner dairies.

It seemed likely at this point that Nancy was referring to staffing issues, but she did not raise that until a little later in the interview.

Nancy: And I don't know who decides what quality is. And there's a lack of knowledge on the side of educators and of whānau. And the jolly funding's been cut for professional development, but I do say that as an owner we have responsibilities to ensure that our teachers are being upskilled. I always say to my girls – look this is your opportunity.

Here was another mention of the government as culpable, not only for licensing too many centres, but also for failing to adequately fund support for professional development. I was not able to ascertain the opportunities that Nancy was referring to for teachers to “seize the chance of”. Here also was another example of a paternalistic discourse regarding teacher/owner relationship. Of interest, however, was Nancy's notion that whānau lack of knowledge about their child's disability. Shepherd, Colby, Kervick and Morris (2017) describe whānau as needing to advocate for their children and thus compelled to engage in information gathering, filtering, networking, advocating and leading. In the fields of disability support, whānau of children with disabilities are increasingly considered as experts in the field of care. Their expertise can deliver an important contribution towards planning their child's care and education (de Geeter, Poppes, & Vlaskamp, 2002).

As anticipated, Nancy followed her comment about there being too many centres with mention of staffing being a barrier.

Ok, so stable staffing - there are lots of challenges for me – lots of challenges. I've got staff who've been with me for 9 or 10 years and some only one or two.

You know it's really hard when there's competition out there and (company name deleted) are offering ridiculous prices for their pay – yeah \$28 per hour for a new grad. That's big money.

Nancy was implying that Willow Company could not afford to include disabled children. Inclusion for disabled children repeatedly emerged in the data as impeded by economics. Overall, the data put forward evidence that teachers and managers view the cost-consideration factors as non-negotiable characteristics of long-day ECEC and, subsequently, the responsibility of government to act on. The entwining of economic stresses and government blaming was of interest to me here. Inclusion of disabled children was being repeatedly impeded by the strongly held standpoint that disabled children cannot access appropriate support from the government agency, GSE, because there isn't enough money to go around. For professionals in the ECEC sector, the belief that the problem belongs to the government could release them from obligation towards disabled children, however, almost all the participants spoke of a willingness to be inclusive albeit, in some cases, with conditions attached.

The 'truth' of the view that it is government that under-funds gives the role of 'the bad guy' to the government and positions the centre as the struggling victim. The not-enough-money thread is strong not only in this data but currently very strong in the sector which is discussed further in Chapter Seven. There is a strong theme throughout the data that underlines the idea that if the government is not prepared to fully support disabled children then how can the centre? Sally's earlier question about the presence (absence) of disabled children had piqued my curiosity: What do teachers truly understand about the nature and purpose of the businesses who employ them? This is further discussed in Chapter Seven where an overview of the issues in the sector currently is brought to the fore.

6.3.2. Teacher preparation for Inclusion

Prior learning about disability, particularly in initial teacher education (ITE) is deemed to equip teachers with more appropriate and in-depth knowledge and skills with which they can create more enriched and positive learning environments for all

children (Cassidy et al., 2005; Copple & Bredekamp, 2009; Kwon, Hong & Jeon, 2017). Kwon, Hong and Jeon's (2017) research in USA found that teachers' specialised training and a bachelor's degree in early childhood education (ECE) were positively associated with their inclusive practices in the classroom; furthermore, "children's perceived contact with people who have disabilities was positively associated with their attitudes toward peers with disabilities" (p. 360). Teacher, owner and manager attitudes towards disabled children were viewed by several participants in this study as important for the success of inclusion as these excerpts demonstrate.

Louise: I think overall, it has a lot to do with attitude of people in the first instance; how they view others and their place in the world, and their own place in the world

Nina: It's only the thinking I would say. Because we do get some funding from the Ministry. They [the children] are referred by health professionals and if they are not, then the centre can approach the Ministry for special professionals who can come and visit the centre if required. It is just awareness and thinking that you can do it. It's a role-modelling thing.

Lisa: I think that it's very important that teachers accept it [inclusion] for a start [.....] they need to be open-minded [.....]and your centre philosophy will really target those teachers that have that same frame of mind.

Nina, Lisa and Louise's comments about teachers' attitudes to disability underpinning successful inclusion or otherwise are critical to inclusion. However, participants in the study seem to be explaining attitudes as sited within individuals. As explained in Chapters Two and Five, in this study attitudes are viewed as a product of dominant discourses. As one becomes influenced by the discourse, one plays a part in influencing others which is then interpreted as attitudinal. Lisa also remarked that a positive attitude alongside content knowledge about disabilities would be needed.

Lisa: Probably a lot of subject content knowledge about disabilities if you are having specific children in your centre. And I think it is really important to have

some sort of professional development. And teachers need to be open-minded about these sorts of issues.

Focusing on subject content about the pathology and characteristics of specific disabilities is a common thread among teachers. Lisa's comments about the need to be open-minded towards disability but also citing the need for knowledge specific to the pathology of a disability may be attributed to the continued influence of biomedical discourse combined with neoliberal discourse.

6.4. Discussion

As Moss (2019) suggests, dominant discourses have a decisive influence on particular subjects. The findings in this chapter suggest that in this case the subject is disabled children, and the discourse of the marketplace (i.e., neoliberalism), positions the subject outside of the sector by privileging the structures of the business. Apparent by its absence in the teacher contributions was any direct reference to management responsibility. No-one said that the management boards/owners will not want to do this because it might affect financial yield on investment. It is intriguing that the owners and managers, particularly of for-profit centres, were not described by teachers as being in any way responsible for the absence of disabled children. This thesis argues that where financial survival or profit is a key motive, children with disability may likely be positioned as a less economically prudent investment yet the teacher participants made little to no mention of business structures or profit motives when asked to think about possible barriers to inclusion. The findings explained in this chapter have more clearly illuminated this. The teachers in the study were quite certain that the responsibility resides with government.

Placing the responsibility with the government of the day is an example of what Foucault referred to as a 'game of truth' (Ball, 2013; Walshaw, 2007). Foucault's later work was concerned with how truth, and the systems of truth and falsity, come to count as true. He claimed that nothing is true, that is not the product of power. Considering Foucault's work, I speculated whether blaming the government for the failings of inclusion, for underpaid teachers and, in many cases, poor working conditions was an indicator of a privileging of a market discourse by stealth? Foucault claimed that truth is a system of exclusion and a system of constraint exercised not only on other discourses, but on a whole series of other practices (Ball, 2015). In this case 'truth' about lack of funding is argued while lack of willingness to accept a lesser profit is never mentioned.

In Chapter two, I wrote of the ways in which discourses make assumptions and values invisible, turn subjective perspectives and understandings into objective 'truths' and determine that some things are self-evident and realistic while other are dubious and impractical (Dalberg & Moss, 2008). The discourse positioning ECEC as inextricably engaged in business objectives has emerged from this data set as logical and unquestionable while at the same time it has created a sense of frustration among teachers, owners, and managers in the study. As the discourses contributing to professional responses about disabled children in the sector unfolded, discourses of human rights and the marketplace of ECEC intersected and contradicted each other, indicating a gap between policy and practice and articulated through a discursive movement I came to term enlightened ableism. To make an analogy, in the same way that racism privileges ethnocentric belief systems and structures, ableism privileges ability over disability in organisational, structural, and individual practices. Enlightened racism is identifiable when people use the rhetoric of inclusiveness and equality and speak against racist practices, yet do not socialise across ethnicities or form authentic personal relationships with people of diverse ethnic groups (Bruce & Wensing, 2012; Jhally & Lewis, 1992). In the same ways that enlightened racism masks the broader cultural failure to recognise the effects of institutionalised racism (Bruce & Wensing, 2012), my suggestion of a discourse movement of enlightened ableism permits the side-stepping, or even failure to recognise the effects of an ableist paradigm. The

rhetoric of enlightened ableism presents a rational, modern, well-informed and humanitarian world view yet allows the continuation of practices that position disabled children as other. Liberal rhetoric, especially regarding to the right to form relationships was evident in the responses of all but one teacher participant. Curiously, all teacher and two owner/manager interviewees claimed the virtues of inclusion by noting the positive benefits for the children, their peers, the whānau and the community yet, at the time these interviews were conducted, no disabled children were present.

Every teacher and all but one of the owners and managers in the study spoke of the notion of inclusion in positive terms claiming children's rights, making somewhat vague reference to legislation and often using the language of both legislation and curriculum while conversely claiming structural and financial barriers to providing disabled children with access to their centre. The teachers, owners and managers in the study appeared caught between the power of the marketplace and their own conscience. It is possible they were confused by the predicament they found themselves in. Somewhere in this complex predicament that is ECEC provision currently, is the knowledge of responsibilities under the legislation. Unpacking this tension between being inclusive and being practical [in relation to the structure of the centre] in Foucauldian terms links to his work on the subject. Foucault (1982) argues dual definitions of the term subject – one being subject to someone else by control and dependence and secondly, tied to one's own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Therefore, subjectivity is the possibility of lived experience within a context, that subjectivity is what we do rather than who we are.

There was no clear differentiation between the for-profit and non-profit centres in the teacher/owner/manager data set. It appears that the opening-up of the sector to investors has carried the non-profit centres along with the flow. Both groups of providers are faced with remaining financially viable in a very competitive market, labour and property costs are high, and in the case of corporates, investor return responsibilities are only a few of the difficulties emerging here. Given the way sector is currently organised and funded, the overall responsibility for welcoming disabled

children undoubtedly lies with management yet, as this chapter demonstrates, management may well be avoiding the responsibility.

The data in this chapter has revealed that the economic principles of neoliberalism are privileging the typical child even when adults working in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors espouse inclusive ideals. There is a profound and perplexing tension borne out of contradictory [employment] expectations: On the one hand, teacher participants in the study understood they were 'legislatively' charged with the responsibility of meeting the rights and needs of *all* children, yet on the other hand they were required to operate under the expectation that this provision would take place in a cost-effective, efficient and, in many cases, profitable (although that word was not spoken) manner. It was not simple or straightforward for any of the participants.

The competing discourses of neoliberalism, biomedicine, and human rights brought to the fore in this chapter imply not an unwillingness to include, but rather a contradictory perception that in the world of long-day ECEC there is little room for children with disabilities to be included, let alone to conform to the immovable structures and routines in place. The balance between what an organisation can or is prepared to pay staff and maintain suitable ratios for inclusion raised problems when other companies were prepared to pay higher wages but run at minimum staffing requirements. Knowledge of, and access to government agencies and support personnel willing to work collaboratively was raised as important for inclusion *but* opportunities to network with teachers in other centres and learn from their experiences, and to undertake professional development was limited because of staffing and schedules, and value for money.

Overall, responses in this theme are a mix of liberal vision and neoliberal pragmatics. However, a sense that teachers were viewing these factors as non-negotiable characteristics of long-day ECEC was most concerning. Neoliberal discourse manifested in truths about working in a long-day ECEC centre and how such centres operate. Such truths, as Foucault (1972) claims, do more than give knowledge or

meaning, they produce specific types of subjects as effects of discursive relations. The ECEC long-day sector is structured in a way that has embraced a business model of delivery that is now seen as *the* way of doing things. Hence, the subjects, in this case teachers, owners and managers, have become a force in perpetuating the very operational practices and structures that they view as problematic. The legislation and policy for inclusion is being overshadowed by the structural obstacles and economic imperatives of long-day ECEC and as a consequence, those responsible for ensuring the intent of the legislation are struggling to see a fit for disabled children.

In an earlier paper, Lyons (2011) suggested that the neoliberal principle assuming education for future contribution appears to have created a renaissance of biomedical definitions of disability. This is nascent in the data by way of participant contributions citing lack of knowledge of the pathological characteristics of specific disabilities. The data discussed in this chapter indicate that, for most participants, learning about disability has been gained via personal life experiences and observations in participants' own schooling (e.g., proximity to special needs units in the school they attended). For several of the mature participants, learning about disability came from being involved in, or exposed to, part-time integration programmes whereby small groups of children with disabilities and their supporting staff attended the mainstream early childhood services. Several of the younger participants noted some learning about disability from teacher education programmes, largely in subsections of other courses. Of all the teachers in the study, few had any recent experiences of spending time with a disabled child. Furthermore, within this section of the data there is evidence of participants having gained understandings about disability by label; the information that comes from learning about the pathology of the disability itself, or by stereotype, whereby all persons with the same pathology are attributed the same characteristics and traits.

No teacher/owner/manager participants specifically reported any formal learning about inclusive practice and in only one case did a participant have knowledge of the guiding document *Including Everyone: Te Reo Tātaki* (Ministry of Education, 2000). While many of the participants employ a human rights discourse of disability

when speaking of inclusion as a philosophy, there is a prevalence of biomedical discourse when speaking of children with disability generally. Gordon-Burns et al. (2012) describe the biomedical discourse of disability as locating disability within pathology and normative differences, and “see the ‘problems’ of disabled children primarily as a product of their own impairments” (p. 159).

Slee (2001) argues that when such that an individualistic gaze is adopted, unacknowledged assumptions about syndromes and disorders dominate. To this point, Goodley (2007) suggests that such categorisation of learners with disability perpetuates a deficit model whereby teachers focus on what learners cannot do by making comparisons with the non-disabled majority. It is likely that the biomedical discourse of disability provides truths about disabilities and makes perfect sense when aligned with neoliberal education intent. It also absolves teachers from further responsibility toward children with disabilities.

Several teaching professionals demonstrated awareness of the legal rights of children with disabilities to access and participate in ECEC, yet the items of underpinning legislation were, in the main, not spoken of specifically. Inclusion was articulated as important and rights-related by most participants. *Te Whāriki* (M.O.E., 1996, 2017) emerged in the data as the important guiding document for inclusion largely because it states that the sector must be inclusive. The data shows evidence that many teachers, owners and managers in ECEC find themselves in a complicated position: they are required by legislation and policy to be inclusive of children with disabilities, via legislation and policy they have been given the language to speak about inclusion, yet for many, making inclusion a reality presents as problematic and confusing. It is therefore a more likely conclusion that neoliberal business motives and operational structures combined with human rights rhetoric have produced a phenomenon in the sector that has given permission for an enlightened ableist movement to thrive. The power to change is in the hand of the adults in the sector which has not been acknowledged, suggesting that change will require that these contradictions be recognised. In the following chapter I use my own experiences over

time to illustrate how the predicament of ECEC has developed to the point it is at currently.

CHAPTER SEVEN: REFLEXIVE COMMENTARY: Tensions and turning points

7.1. Introduction

In this chapter I revisit and reflect on my personal, decades-long experiences in the ECEC sector. I include my thoughts and recollections of important events and share insights into how these events have contributed to the current discursive predicament that Aotearoa New Zealand's ECEC sector is struggling with regarding the inclusion of disabled children. The term predicament (see Chapter One) is used to describe the situation as it currently stands in the ECEC sector post 30 years of free market policy: the predicament is the consequence of discursive intersections and contradictions influencing and confusing teachers, owners, managers and whānau alike.

I also draw on the writing of others concerned about the early childhood sector and the ways the structure of the sector may be influencing groups of which I have interviewed a small sample. At points in this chapter, I reflect on my own position in the thesis narrative. This appears to be me writing my story which as, mentioned in Chapter Two, has been challenged by poststructuralists who insist the impossibility of the researcher telling her story with any validity (Gannon, 2006). Denzin (2003), however, suggests that these 'my-stories' might also be reflexive, critical tellings. Throughout this chapter text boxes are used to separate anecdotes of my experiences in ECEC to grant me entry points into the discussion from a personal, reflexive perspective

At the outset of this study, and because I had been a member of each of the participant groups at some point in my life, I assumed that I would have a measure of insider-researcher self; that I would understand people and therefore retell their contributions well. Somewhere in the research process I began to question this

assumption. As Chan (2017) noted, assumptions regarding researcher/participant similarities are complex and not straightforward. I began to reflect on discrete experiences that have shaped my position in different ways to other participants in the study. Lives are different, take different courses and are influenced by and participate in different discourses.

This study has searched for answers as to how and why has it come about that disabled children are still positioned as *other* despite raft of legislative and policy initiatives to address this. Following Foucault's (1980) suggestion that one should try to locate power at the extreme points of its exercise, what has emerged in this study is that long day ECEC is one such example of an extreme point of the exercise of power. Mills (2003) noted that Foucault characterised power as an abstract force that determines what will be known, rather than assuming that individuals develop ideas and knowledge. This study shows evidence that long day ECEC is an active participant in, and recipient of such power regimes. Teacher, owner and manager participation may be more subtle, or even obscure, but the effects are the same. To this end I can reflect on how I have brought dominant discourses to the fore in my analysis and subsequent to this, reveal shifting subject positions for myself. I realise that absorbing much of the new personal learning that has come about through this project has prompted me to (re)consider my own recollections of the sector over time using Foucauldian tools. My life experiences as an ECEC teacher combined with new learning has had a bearing on how I read and interpreted that data. In the next section I reflect on shifts in my understandings about quality, beginning with a personal experience.

7.2. Pondering quality

Text box (TB) 1:

In my 30s I attended a public meeting about the use of government money to bulk fund privately owned ECEC centres. I was a centre owner at the time. I suggested to the meeting that centres should be held accountable for keeping evidence of how this money was being spent. Government had proposed that the funds should be used to improve quality, lower parent fees, provide professional development opportunities for teachers, and increase wages. I raised my hand and asked to speak, arguing that failure to require such accountability could result in the opening-up of the sector to private investors which potentially could erode quality and conditions. I was verbally attacked by a small group of owners in the carpark after the meeting and when I reached mycar, I saw that the door had been damaged.

While I still stand by my statement at the meeting that bulk-funding would open the sector up to investors looking for a subsidised yield and likely erode quality (see text box above), I acknowledge now that my understandings of what ‘quality’ might ‘look’ like have changed somewhat. At the time, I understood quality only as an abstract, as in many ways linked to quality people, those who had studied to be a teacher and who had years of experience in delivering quality as they had been trained to do. This discourse around quality remains strong in the sector with the argument for qualified teachers currently an aspect of the current Labour Government’s strategic planning for the sector. However, at that point in my career, I wasn’t viewing quality as dynamic, as the product of changing discourses privileging a particular set of values about what ECEC should look like at a point in time. When I studied to be an ECEC teacher, and for the following two decades, there was no curriculum to guide practice and no governing body to suggest that good practice would go beyond the dominant culture ideals of that time. My own centre had been verbally pronounced as being of high quality by the licensing authority of the time, the Department of Social Welfare. They had checked fences and gates, first aid supplies, cooking and sleeping

arrangements. The 'high quality' judgement was pronounced not only because the centre had been deemed safe, but also because I had also set up the centre for learning as I had been trained to do. (I received a certificate to put on the wall but no written report). This reinforced my beliefs about quality being associated with qualifications, a view I still hold. What I was not acknowledging at that point was that I was also an investor with market discourses influencing much of my decision-making. Via my qualifications and experience, and my investment, I had positioned myself differently to others in the sector.

TB2:

My own two children attended the centre I owned. On one occasion a delegate of the six teachers that I had employed asked to meet speak with me on behalf of the staff. She asked me to move my son to another centre. This child, according to all six teachers, was impeding the learning of other children. After this, I decided to move my son to another centre because I didn't want him spending his days with people that didn't want him

The event described above really surprised me at the time. I was shocked that we could include children with disabilities that were quite profound but my own child's 'quirkiness' couldn't be managed. I was saddened by the lack of, what I saw then, as kindness. The image of the learner embedded in *Te Whāriki* (M.O.E., 2017) which positions children as capable and competent learners, had not gained foothold at that point and I saw the sector as one in which only qualified teachers had a place; people who were prepared to give their all for the benefit of vulnerable young children.

As I revisit this period of my life, I would argue that education practices contemporary to that time were largely underpinned by developmentalism, a charitable discourse and the emerging neoliberal discourse of the marketplace. I was an active mechanism of the discursive predicament the data has shown evidence still prevailing today. During this period, Aotearoa New Zealand was developing human rights legislation of its own (e.g., *The New Zealand Human Rights Act, 1993*) and had become signatory to international initiatives intended to support, in part, the inclusion

of disabled children in regular settings (e.g., United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989). This was reflected in the development of the first edition of *Te Whāriki* in the mid-1990s, and subsequently, inclusion of disabled children in ECEC became a topic for discussion and contemplation. By this time, I had sold the business and qualified as an early intervention teacher. The early intervention study, albeit rationalised via biomedical discourse, also gave me insight into different ways to consider disability and inclusion. Looking back on this time, I understand that the discursive predicament, including the influence of marketplace interpretations of quality, remained a part of how I was positioned myself and how I positioned others. The following anecdote shares a situation that demonstrates this.

T.B. 3

I was asked by the early intervention lecturer to present a seminar to my class of twelve early intervention peers. I called it “Marketing your Qualifications”. In my talk I explained how one might use one’s qualification to establish a government funded ECEC business thereby increasing one’s income considerably while still working for inclusive ideals. The talk was received very well with follow-up questions largely focused on how to get started, arrange finance and so forth.

I was assuming that my beliefs around quality went hand in hand with free enterprise, even though I had publicly argued some years before that such enterprise would eventually lead to an erosion of quality. At the end of this study year, I was approached to become a lecturer in ITE for a large college of education that would eventually become a university faculty. I accepted the role and became responsible for inclusive education in the Bachelor of Education, ECEC. Looking back, I see this as a critical point in my life experiences in the sector. I had moved from a place where I was largely unchallenged to one in which I had to begin to reconsider the paradigms I had operated under. I needed to be prepared to articulate my stance on disability and inclusion. Furthermore, it was vital that I had a clear vision of how this would look in ECEC practice.

7.3. Reflecting on inclusion

I had begun my career in the presence of exclusionary policies for disabled children and begun to refocus my thinking in the light of legislation intending for all children to be learning together. No longer was I the charitable, good teacher because in the background I was raising a child who had attracted a label, followed by another label which was retracted and replaced with another one entirely. I was learning to think and argue differently. I was again surrounded by biomedical discourse and arguing my child's position with a social constructivist argument. He was my child and he was not different. He needed what everyone else had.

As Wills (2006) noted, moving from formerly exclusionary practices had been cast within a dominant neoliberal managerial policy environment: A technician approach that focused on management rather than on rights. Wills was arguing that the contestable funding for support had taken priority over the rights of disabled children and along with it, the last vestiges of my marketplace affiliations with quality.

In the text box below, I describe my son Finn's experience of his first and last encounter with teacher aid support at school.

TB 4:

After years of battling, at age twelve Finn finally received three hours of funding support for a teacher aid for one term (approx. twelve weeks). Finn came home from school and told me a teacher aid had come to help with sewing. "I must be the dumbest kid in school, but I do have a new hat and some shorts that she made for me"

After this experience I approached the classroom teacher and she told me she did not like having other adults watching her teach. I wished she had told me this before I had argued and advocated for support.

By age fifteen, schooling was no longer a tenable option for Finn, and I decided that he could stay home for a while. I received a phone call from the Ministry of Education that challenged my right to remove Finn from school before he had turned 16 years of age. The Ministry informed me that if I didn't attempt home schooling I would end up in court. During this phone call my response to this comment was, "please do that" i.e., take me to court. I didn't hear from them again.

After the phone call from the Ministry of Education, I felt a huge sense of relief. No longer was schooling Finn's problem, it was mine. I was absolutely prepared to go to court so that the system's failure to provide for Finn could be heard and documented but this opportunity did not arise. It was at this point that I understood that the discourse of human rights had overtaken any remains of a charitable approach to disability I may have held on to without realising. My views around disability and inclusion had become rights based not needs based, and I began to develop my thinking about my role as a rights facilitator and advocate for disabled children and their whānau. By now, Finn had grown up, succeeded at university, and become at home in the workplace. The university provided everything to ensure his success.

7.4. Quality concerns in the ECEC sector

This research in this thesis has put forward compelling evidence of the influence of neoliberal economic discourse on the subject positions of disabled children. Neoliberalism has emphasised almost all dimensions of our ECEC professional lives in 'ledger' terms. It has also redefined the notion of quality. Today, quality is largely associated with regulatory systems and accountabilities. Such systems are strongly associated with risk and safety. Quality has increasingly become something to be measured and expressed as standards and evaluated as outcomes. Such measuring risks narrowing the lenses for understanding and thinking about quality (Duhn & Greishaber, 2016; Fenech, 2011). McLachlan et al. (2018) suggest an inevitable tension between the regulatory environment for ECEC which is determined by the Education

(ECE services) regulations (2008) which sets minimum standards around such things as ratios, space and safety and the broader ideals of quality curriculum outlined in *Te Whāriki* (M.O.E., 2017) and which are crucial for disabled children to access. The notion that centre quality essentially comprises structural and process elements warrants problematizing in future research (Fenech, 2011). As this research has indicated in Chapter One, thinking about quality in terms of disabled children and inclusion becomes less likely in a discourse where children are thought of in ledger terms. On a ledger, as Chapter Six shows evidence of, disabled children are positioned as expensive and time consuming.

Today, teachers are entrenched in measurable, quality management systems. They are not only held accountable for working to budgets but have also become increasingly accountable for actions that would once have been considered minor adjustments. Accountability is not necessarily a bad thing when it involves two elements in balance; being held to account by others and giving account of yourself (Lingard, 2017) yet this does not appear to be the case in the sector. I learned about the stress of working under this type of accountability after I resigned from the university. I decided to return to teaching to reacquaint myself with the realities of the profession I had been teaching and writing about. I became employed as a Centre Manager in a corporately owned company. The recollection below is an example of how workload stresses can build up.

TB 6:

I moved an item of furniture that was causing children to collide with others. I was held to account by an area manager (whose role is to provide professional guidance and support for teachers) for moving this item because I had failed to write an internal evaluation of the positioning of said item prior to moving it. This evaluation was expected to contain before and after photographs and an explanation of the decision.

This example signals how reorganisation of the ECEC sector can play out in the lives of teachers. Teachers in the long day ECEC work under enormous stress and microtasks take valuable time away from children. However, failure to comply with regulatory systems and providing documentation of all aspects of quality management can result in a business losing their licence and funding. The long-day sector is a business and economic stability is critical to its survival.

Meanwhile, for disabled children and their whānau the story has not improved. Teachers, owners and managers blame government (see Chapter Six) which is in part to blame. Limited and contestable funding for disability is causing problems but there is more to this. Government blaming has become a discursive trend serving to side-step the problem of the sector as a marketplace where economic viability takes preference over inclusion. For teachers, to challenge the problems of a free-market model would not serve any purpose in the short term as teachers and their employers are intricately involved in the livelihoods of each other. The business needs the teachers and vice versa. Neither party, as the present study shows, can clearly see a place for disabled children in the model as it currently stands. This seems to be partly a government funding issue and partly an issue of a dominant discourse in which both employer and employee are entrenched in a neoliberal structure that is elephantine in proportion. I believe I was prescient in saying all those years ago that opening-up the sector to private investors without accountability for public funds would create problems for quality. I had not however considered the specific impact on disabled children, yet it seems clear.

Foucault (1997) suggests converting a problem into a question, the aim of which is to shift unmovable truths in order to create space for new ways of thinking, new agency and social change. New ways of thinking about the ECEC funding structures in order to include accountability for tax-payer contributions may guarantee that private enterprise in the sector would pass on the benefits to staff and children, disabled or typically developing. This is expanded in Chapter Eight.

7.5. Qualified teacher supply and demand

Unsurprisingly, the latest development in the sector concerns teacher supply and demand. The Aotearoa New Zealand ECEC sector is rapidly becoming short of teachers. This is not an unexpected turn of events and one that, while it may do some good for the individual teacher's bargaining powers, will do little in the short term to alleviate the issue of accessing inclusive ECEC for disabled children for whom qualified and experienced teachers are essential. The M.O.E. (2009) told an early childhood supply summit that in the worst-case scenario, the sector could be short of 2600 teachers by the following year (Farquahar, 2009). Not until 2018 did the Early Childhood Council (E.C.C., the representatives of private owners) announce that 30 percent of its centres are currently stuck: they have staffing issues and do not know what to do. This [staffing] crisis point has matured over the past 18 months claims the ECC (Alexander, 2018). The ECC are petitioning government to address this concern which they have ignored for a decade to add ECE teachers to the immigration priority list to meet immediate staffing needs. Meanwhile, the for-profit sector has continued to diminish teacher conditions, increase license numbers and, if the teacher surveys are representative, in many cases bully staff. Attracting experienced teachers back into the sector and protecting the ones remaining would be the preferred option for inclusion in the sector but this requires a substantial increase in wages and improvement in overall conditions.

Currently there are widening disparities between the wages of long-day ECE teachers and the salaries of M.O.E. direct-paid kindergarten teachers. Kindergarten teachers were awarded a significant salary increase to provide parity with their primary school teacher counterparts in 2019. This resulted in as much as \$NZ49,000 (Long, 2019) difference between long serving, qualified ECEC teachers in long day centres and their Kindergarten compatriots. Long (2019) reported that qualified and certified teachers with an early childhood education degree in the long day ECEC sector, must be paid a minimum of \$45,491 a year or more. Teachers with higher

qualifications must be paid \$46,832 or more. However, and by comparison, as of 2021, kindergarten teachers will be paid between \$51,358 and \$90,000.

Both groups hold the same benchmark qualifications earned through the same universities and polytechnics. The difference lies in the ownership model of the employing organisation. New Zealand Kindergartens (N.Z.K.) is an incorporated society and a registered charity. The organisation is also part of the State Services Sector which to some extent affords a measure of leverage for remuneration and conditions of state employees. The State Services Commission is the central public service department of New Zealand charged with overseeing, managing, and improving the performance of the State sector of New Zealand and its organisations.

The long day majority-privately-owned sector is not included under the umbrella of the State Services Commission. Teachers are employed on (often confidential) individual contracts and frequently discouraged from joining their representing union by private owners. The union, New Zealand Education Institute (N.Z.E.I.), is currently the only course of action to address the disparities unless a teacher is courageous and fortunate enough to argue for and achieve an individual contract to match. As evidenced in Chapter Six, there is a strong argument for lower wages in the long-day which is having a bearing on inclusion: As Phyllis (centre manager) pointed out in Chapter Six, “Whānau would have to be charged higher fees and some children might miss out because of the cost”. Teachers feel a responsibility to the families they have formed relationships with and argue that this should not be the case. There are also differences in employment conditions between groups in the sector such as access to sick leave which is frequently capped at five days per annum. According to teacher blogs, social media pages, and personal communications intended for me, teachers in long day ECEC centres are disheartened which is why they are leaving the sector in large numbers.

7.6. Querying the sector structure

In the course of this research, I have felt overwhelmed by the confusions regarding disabled children and their whānau in the current free-market climate. Chapter Six shows evidence of teacher, owner and manager interest and willingness to include disabled children yet the marketplace currently presents the sector as an industry providing government assured yield. Additionally, the following memory demonstrates that it is not just private investors who stand to profit from the current climate.

TB 7:

Out of interest, I responded to a for-sale advertisement for an early childhood centre. The centre had a considerable flight of stairs up the front door. I asked the salesman about access for disabled children and was told: “you just say that you’re full”. His commission should the sale go ahead was significant.

Long day ECEC centres receive public/government funding by way of a complex triadic arrangement based on the number and ages of children present and the number of teachers available to work with the children at any point in time. To achieve the highest band of funding, the ratio of qualified to unqualified staff required is calculated at 80% qualified teachers to 20% unqualified. The minimum funding band requires 50/50 qualified to unqualified. Ratios of children-to-teachers are critical. A breach of ratio is a breach of license. There are widely used computer programmes (for example APT Business software) that manage staffing and child enrolments so that managers can see at a glance whether they are meeting ratio requirements. My next recollection is evidence of this.

TB 8:

I had occasion to visit a new privately owned centre where I noticed a computer screen mounted on the wall at adult height in a playroom. I asked about its

purpose and was told that teachers use it to check the ratios if they need to leave the room for any reason.

Teachers count children and examine ratios at frequent points throughout each day. Drawing on my own experience, I am aware that either teachers or children are moved around to ensure ratios are adequate. To illustrate this point, the example below is drawn from my own experience as a centre manager.

TB 9:

As a newly appointed centre manager I was initiated into the intricacies of managing the ratios to ensure that the company might attract the highest level of funding while never exceeding the ratio of teachers to children required. To exceed the ratio would mean a company may pay wages unnecessarily. It was explained by the business manager that, should I find I had exceeded the ratio, I should send a teacher home (without pay if they were a casual or relief teacher).

This raises real concerns for the future of disabled children as participants in the long day sector. As the majority of services are structured in this way, it seems it would be of questionable benefit to disabled children who rely on stable staffing and environments in many cases. Furthermore, the benefits for any preschooler are currently being cast into doubt as the quality of many centres is being called into question as this information released by way of The Official Information Act (O.I.A.)

The M.O.E. downgraded more than 300 services across the country from full to provisional licenses in 2017 and 2018 after identifying problems. The 300 services that had their license downgraded in the past two years are the tip of the iceberg, they said, and problems could go undetected for years (Franks, 2019)

A recent article in the largest national newspaper (Collins, March 23, 2019) called for tougher action after 26 ECEC centres broke the regulations repeatedly, including one group of centres that lost their license, got it back, and then lost it again.

For many teachers in the sector there are no on-site working owners and much of the governance of each centre is undertaken remotely either by boards/committees (non-profit) or by large companies with diverse structures of management (e.g., for-profit). Any opportunity, or responsibility for making institutional change on the part of teachers or centre managers is relatively limited. The teachers are answerable to the managers who in turn, are responsible to either boards/committees or corporate owners. In some organisations a policy and compliance manager (or similar title) makes policy decisions which, by remote, implicate the practices of a great number of centres and even greater number of teachers. This was shown to be the case by Petunia (policy and compliance manager) in Chapter Six. Some companies employ business managers, working in a hierarchical environment in which the business manager (usually not a teacher) ranks above the qualified and experienced centre teachers. Professional development may be limited to that which is organised and provided by people within the company. Financial support (if indeed there is any) for furthering qualifications is limited to undergraduate degrees – the benchmark minimum qualification required by the company.

Such large organisational structures make it extremely difficult for the small private provider, who is more likely to include disabled children, to sustain the quality that they wish to provide. The homely, limited roll and fully qualified staff providers struggle to compete against the spread of the corporate footprint. Alexander (2019) recently asked the question: “Is it acceptable for an ECEC company to cry out for more public funds to enable it to pay teachers adequate salaries when its CEO receives \$550K per annum (The Prime Minister of New Zealand receives \$471K)?”.

Adding to the predicament in the sector, The New Zealand Herald (November 2018) published a comment by the Early Childhood Council (ECC) chief executive officer (representing private owners) arguing against increasing qualified teacher percentages in the sector. The ECC asked where the extra teachers would come from at a time of shortage. Qualified teachers with positive attitudes to inclusion have been shown to be the most important resource for disabled children. These qualified teachers are leaving the sector due to stressful conditions and poor remuneration as described earlier in this chapter yet in many cases they are blamed for creating the teacher shortage that the sector is so concerned about.

Adding to this concern, reports indicate that currently in the sector teachers are being poorly paid, bullied and are stressed, and government funding does not allow for the improved ratios which would make inclusion workable. For example, Dr Sarah Alexander (formerly Farquhar), Chief Executive Officer of Child Forum, reported that a third of early childhood teachers and supervisors had been bullied over a 12-month period (2019). Alexander was drawing on one of a series of survey findings released by the National Network for Early Childhood Services and Independent Research based on a survey of 900 workers carried out in 2017. The threat of bullying makes it difficult to challenge decisions about inclusion. Alexander's results would appear to put the centre owners at fault alongside government, however, where disability and inclusion are concerned, stories of government falling behind on its responsibility are claimed repeatedly (see Chapter Six).

Conversely, the fact ECEC centres are multiplying all over the country would indicate that astute entrepreneurs are seeing a good yield on their investment. For a range of reasons, teachers are undoubtedly, yet perhaps inadvertently, active in the marketplace discourse within which ratios are kept high, diverse learners are discouraged, and businesses thrive. The work lives of early childhood teachers can

become quite restrained in that they lead exceptionally busy lives, work long hours in often over-crowded conditions, and, by regulation, are very compliance focused.

Alexander (2019) reports that not only are there problems with funding structures, staffing, pay and conditions, but also that supporting children with their care and learning needs are significant in the sector. The latest Early Childhood Sector Confidence Survey (Alexander, 2019) reported several anonymous participant responses to a question about whether the government cares.

Teacher respondent 1:

It just feels like we are losing ground against a tide of privatisation, longer hours for whānau working, less family time, the cost of living for families and teachers. I had high hopes when the current Government was elected but since then there has been little action. The [new] Strategic Plan outlines some very positive statements but then the timelines are so far out. ECE has had no support over the term of the previous government and the privatisation agenda has damaged community based, small private owners and kindergartens

Teacher respondent 2:

I think the government is not focused on the real issues that face the sector. Some of the current decisions being made will actually create other detrimental impacts to our sector that have not been considered or acknowledged by government.

Teacher respondent 3:

Everything moves slow, e.g. extra support for children with additional needs - where is it?

When asked in the same survey about what was not going well in their own services responses aligned with the findings of this study:

Teacher respondent 4:

The owners are expanding and therefore will have less money for teacher pay rises.

Teacher respondent 5:

Lack of investment in staff and centres.

Teacher respondent 6:

Offering incentives to families when using our service means the income is affected, which impacts on staff wages, the ability to buy resources, and the amount available for PD.

Teacher respondent 7:

Money and profit over quality.

Teacher respondent 8:

Profits not going back into the centre. Staff, all qualified, being paid extremely low wages.

Prior to Alexander's Early Childhood Sector Confidence Survey (2019), Macartney (2016) noted concerns in a background paper prepared for the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG).

Well qualified and supported early childhood teachers have the knowledge and skills required to understand and meet the needs of diverse learners and their

families, including disabled or labelled children. However, with increasing, and now almost total privatisation of ECEC provision, the conflict between making a profit through limiting costs and providing the best structural conditions and support for quality education is a serious barrier and concern. Children, in particular children and families who are identified as having 'additional needs', are easily viewed as a drain on resources, time and income (p. 2).

Currently, the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) is now calling for nationalisation of the sector based on reports of providers prioritising profit over quality of service (Neuwelt-Kearns & Ritchie, 2020).

7.7. Chapter summary

This chapter has drawn on my own experiences in the sector over time. It shows how my personal perspectives have shifted as I recognised how I was positioning myself and had been positioned within discourses surrounding disability and inclusion; it has followed my subject position to the present. I have drawn also on Jackson and Mazzei's (2008) contention that autoethnographic-style writing, such as the reflexive commentary used in this chapter, is in keeping with Foucault's (1988) description of 'curiosity'. Hence, I have used my own recollections as a means to illustrate my concerns about the changes in the sector as I interpreted them both in the past and currently. Consequently, this chapter has also provided an overview of the predicament that ECEC finds itself in and how this has come to be from my own and others' perspectives.

In this chapter, I did not intend to illustrate neoliberalism as purely concerned with free market capitalism, but rather to expose examples of the capillary discourses that are playing out in the sector currently as a result of neoliberalism's reach. As this chapter points out, based on examples from my own experience over three decades as a teacher, owner and manager, neoliberalism, contrary to the freedom it espouses, is trending towards authoritarianism in the sector. Control of teachers has produced a

way of working that has become both a compliance burden to teachers themselves, and a contradiction to the documents that guide their practice. The chapter has explained the notion of quality as being regulatory in nature (Fenech, 2011) and thus creating an environment in which Foucault's (1979) use of Bentham's panopticon as a metaphor fits tidily. By explanation, the panopticon is a disciplinary concept in the form of a central observation tower placed within a circle of prison cells. From the tower, a guard can see every cell and inmate, but the inmates are unable to see into the tower. Hence the prisoners discipline themselves. Given that Foucault (1979) argued that social control comes into being through discourses, and that discourses come with their own sets of permissions, it seems likely that self-surveillance is a contributing factor in the predicament that ECEC finds itself in. This could be partly attributed to perceptions of risk, which Page (2016) argues about teaching generally, is the primary driver.

With the ever-increasing strengthening of neoliberalism in the last 15 years, marketisation and competition have become ever more intense in the school system producing ever more intense concerns with risk and ever more stringent mechanisms of judgement (Page, 2016, p. 4)

Risk and safety were shown in Chapter Five to be a barrier to acceptance into ECEC for disabled children. This risk is not merely physical although as earlier mentioned (Chapter 6), physical risk appears to take precedence. Risk is also manifesting by way of anxiety in the parents of typically developing children; anxiety that continues to impinge on teacher practices in ECEC as owners and managers attempt to meet the demands of the market. For the owner or manager this can translate into an expectation of teacher practices that increase teacher accountability in areas that they have not studied (such as formal preparation for schooling) and that are also considered by many teachers to be unsuitable for preschoolers, whether they are disabled or typically developing.

Economic anxiety blends with parental anxiety about the future for our children: without a good primary school they won't get into a good secondary

school; without the right school qualifications they won't get into a highly ranked university; without the right higher education credentials they won't get into the top professions; without joining the top professions they won't be economically secure (Page, 2016, p. 3)

Alongside the influence of developmentalism in the sector, such formalising of learning, and conflicting teacher accountabilities is creating barriers for disabled children that have been outlined in Chapter Six. As this chapter has shown, while the long day ECEC sector continues to be organised by neoliberal principles the intent of the legislation for inclusion of disabled children will likely flounder.

CHAPTER EIGHT: FINAL DISCUSSION

This study has questioned how policies and practices in the long-day ECEC sector are being influenced by discourses that position disabled children in ways that contradict the intent of the legislation for inclusion in Aotearoa New Zealand. The research questions centred around a key problem; the potentially *othered* subject positions of disabled children and the subtleties of how this positioning has come about despite legislative intent to the contrary. At the end of this chapter there are policy recommendations both for teachers, owners and managers, and for Government. This chapter is presented in discrete sections following the three research questions. These sections are followed by a discussion section in which the nuanced and perplexing relationships between discourses are examined, explained, and discussed.

To respond to the research questions, the study began with an examination of Aotearoa New Zealand's legislation intending provision for the rights of disabled children in everyday settings. Chapter One, the introduction, provided an overview of this legislation and Aotearoa New Zealand's ECE curriculum document, *Te Whāriki*, *The Human Rights Act* (1993), *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989), *The New Zealand Disability Strategy* (Ministry of Health, 2001) and *The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2006). The study explored the development of this legislation and policy against the backdrop of neoliberalism, the overarching economic policy environment in which the legislation for inclusion was expected to play out. As Fenech and Sumsion (2007) explain, power is fluid and multi-directional, local and unstable: "In recognising that power is exercised at multiple local sites, a myriad of ways in which power may be affected and experienced through the chain of relations becomes possible" (p. 111). Understanding the aim of the neoliberal position as reducing the state's financial burden, allowing it to withdraw from direct responsibility and promoting policies that encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own economic wellbeing led me to seek the

contradictions and tensions between the social justice focus of the legislation and the structuring of the ECEC sector as a market model within which consumer choice is key. The notion of choice holds authority in the neoliberal marketplace, yet the literature examined in Chapter Three raised serious concern about whether whānau of disabled children can exercise this choice on the part of their child. It is as Macartney (2016) argues.

With increasing, and now almost total privatisation of ECEC provision, the conflict between making a profit through limiting costs and providing the best structural conditions and support for quality education is a serious barrier and concern. Children, in particular children and families who are identified as having 'additional needs', are easily viewed as a drain on resources, time and income (p. 2)

Following up on this concern, using wide ranging seminal and current literature, understandings about disability and inclusion were tracked through curriculum and related policies. This culminated in an investigation of the current organisational structure of long day ECEC which was examined in Chapter Seven. This background research found that there are significant rifts in the relationship between legislation, the important literature proposing inclusion as beneficial to young disabled children, and the neoliberal organisation of the sector.

The theoretical framework (Chapter Two) explains how the work of Michel Foucault was used in this study to uncover the subtleties of interactions between discourses that assisted in identifying the discursive sources of this rift between legislation and practice for disabled children. As Foucault (1977) claimed,

Discursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general

behaviour, in forms of transmission and diffusion, and pedagogical forms which at once, impose and maintain them (p. 200)

The findings chapters (Chapters Five and Six) offered evidence of patterns of general behaviour towards disabled children and their whānau that were indicative of collective discursive practices in the sector that were othering disabled children. These practices were traced through named discourses, further evidence of which has been illustrated in the reflexive commentary of Chapter Seven. Hence, Chapter Seven provides a backdrop for understanding the current complexities and tensions, the predicament, that teachers, owners and managers are engaging with (see 7.3).

A discursive trend, referred to in the study as *enlightened ableism*, was put forward whereby teachers, owners and managers speak positively to whānau about the sector's commitment to inclusion yet claim barriers in their own centre that prevent inclusion taking place.

8.1. What is this thesis saying about the possibilities for inclusion in the long day ECEC sector?

In this study the whānau participants put forward significant concerns about the possibility of gaining access to suitable and welcoming early childhood education for their disabled children. They raised concerns and provided examples of being denied access by a range of means. These *means* whānau spoke of indicated that there are subtle workings of several discourses operating together. There were obvious discursive signposts in the data such as the use of biomedical descriptors explaining disabled children which could be traced back to a dominant marketplace discourse whereby economic viability took precedence over inclusion. The biomedical discourse predominated, on occasion pragmatically and at other times, by way of capillary discourses (e.g., safety and risk).

Despite legislation, policy and curriculum intending inclusion, the study found that, rather than teachers, owners and managers understanding and acting on their legislated responsibility for including disabled children, biomedical discourse continues to be a powerful contributor to the view that disabled children are problematic and subsequently expensive to include. As Nancy (owner) commented: “We had one little girl who was so severely physically disabled that for her to be in our care wasn’t appropriate but that came through with our consultation with the whānau”.

The problem that the biomedical discourse is creating in the sector is that it can be rationalised by neoliberal economics. Where economic viability or profit is prioritised over inclusion, a rift appears between the legislated rights of the disabled child and the long day ECEC sector as a site for inclusion. The child is seen as expensive to include and further misaligned with neoliberal ideals for a future of independence, agency and contribution to society. Understanding of this rift has worked its way into whānau perceptions of the sector as being mainly non-inclusive. Rebecca (parent) summed this up in her comment, “I would actually be horrified at the thought of cold calling to enrol him because I couldn’t bear for him to be rejected”. Several of the whānau participants viewed this as attributable to an entrenched biomedical view of disability in the sector. As Vicky (parent) stated; “the health (biomedical) model is a dangerous one because you categorise them (the children) as having something wrong.” However, the study shows that, while teachers may feel nervous about their ability to cope with disabled children, this is not simply attributable to fear of difference presented as deficit by biomedicine.

Developmental theory, particularly as it is applied to structuring ECEC centres by age group (e.g., Gunn, 2019), was shown as a significant deterrent for whānau in this study (see Chapter 5). All the ECEC centres involved or implicated by association (see Chapter 4.4) in this research were divided and funded by age group. Several of the teaching participants were working in centres designed and built to cater to stereotypical thinking about child development as a linear trajectory. Furthermore, where the company’s architectural design was a part of the *brand* of the company, the

brand speaks to whānau of disabled children that the centre is developmentally and economically focused. As Rebecca, mother of Campbell, stressed, “Dividing up the centre into specific age groups has led to an expectation that at certain ages children will behave in certain ways and therefore a child who doesn’t behave in those ways is not always welcome in that room”.

8.2. How is this transpiring in terms of policies and practices?

The earlier mentioned discursive trend, enlightened ableism, is put forward in this study as a way of shedding light on how the legislation is being acted on in ways that influence the positioning of disabled children. As Lyons (2013) explained, the rhetoric of enlightened ableism is providing for the continuation of practices that position disabled children as other. The study shows evidence of citing safety concerns as a means of encouraging whānau to be complicit in the decision not to enrol their child. One whānau participant, Rebecca, explained that ECEC centres emphasise their fear, which is not necessarily a risk, “They will put that fear on to the parents and that is why the parents won’t send them. If you can’t keep him safe, then I can’t leave him”. Safety discourse positions the disabled child as needy and requiring specific care and attention which draws on biomedical discourse for justification.

Throughout the findings (Chapters Five and Six) participants cited access to lack of funding and resources as a key reason for inclusion being problematic. This study was not concerned with statistics about specific to disability funding entitlements or problems with delays in assessment as this issue has been cited over many years by respected researchers (e.g., Foster-Cohen & van Bysterveldt, 2016; Macartney, 2016 Purdue, 2009) and it has been shown to be the case in this study also. However, as a consequence of contestable funding, disabled children continued to be positioned in this study as a drain on resources, time and income. Government blaming has featured strongly in both of Chapters Five and Six, yet nothing was mentioned about any fiscal responsibility on the part of private owners/companies. Given the neoliberal economic platform on which ECEC resides, in this study, limited access to funding for support was

also read as capillary to biomedical discourse in which disabled children are understood by way of deficit. Citing government funding shortfalls is a convenient way of managing this very real tension. To this point, Slee (2011) noted that lack of resourcing for disability is used as a defence for segregation or refusing enrolment. The repeated construction of disabled children as an expensive problem has permeated much of this study. This has manifested in whānau beliefs that the sector will not want them.

8.3. Kei hea ahau ināianai? Where am I now?

This section responds to the title of the thesis which asked: What subject positions are available to the disabled child within the discourses operating in the ECEC sector currently? This study has shown evidence that there are limited subject positions available to disabled children in the long day, largely privatised, ECEC sector. By way of dominant discourses such as biomedicine and neoliberalism, and capillary discourses (e.g., safety and risk), the disabled child has largely been positioned as belonging elsewhere. This is largely attributable to neoliberal marketplace structure which has become entrenched in the structures of the sector. Baltdana (2012) explained that at its core, neoliberalism focuses on standardisation and accountability with quality best ensured by top down regulations and compliance monitoring. For teachers, this is manifesting in responsibilities for managing ratios, working to minimum staffing levels, managing large groups and accounting for the minutiae of incidental detail as Chapter Seven describes. Teachers' lives are complex, stressful and constrained. Additionally, given the role of nurturing and promoting the company by ensuring the centre remains viable and attractive to consumers, it is not surprising that this study finds teachers, owners and managers citing reasons why the legislation for inclusion may not be adhered to.

In this study, discourses of human rights and social justice, embedded in the legislation and curriculum governing the sector's responsibilities for inclusion, have provided the language to speak of inclusion but to act on it is shown as highly

problematic. The Foucauldian tools, combined with reflexive commentary employed in this study, have illuminated the ways in which an interaction of discourses have created this predicament both for the sector, and for disabled children. The predicament is shown to be discursive in origin. Underfunding for disability is just one small characteristic of neoliberal governance which, while alleging to provide quality and opportunity, is intimately tied to governing the individual's way of living.

8.4. Limitations and future directions

I offer a strong caveat at this point: some of the discussion may seem to portray teachers, owners and managers in a negative light. This is not my intention. Throughout the study participants seemed to be open, honest, and willing to share experiences, reflections and, in some cases, ideas about moving forward towards inclusion. Rather, the study has engaged with the nuance of allied discourses whereby the disabled child's subject position within a discourse is reaffirmed or disrupted by another discourse, thus contriving to present a view that appears palatable but does not progress inclusion as either a cause or a practicality.

There are limitations in the approaches I have used to bring forth the data that form the basis for this study. Interviewing involves decisions and interactions on the part of the researcher as does the 'reading' of the text. While I have made every effort to ensure I was not attempting to bring forward discourses that I was interested in, my presence for the purpose of the study brought with it an element of power in the situation. While poststructural methodology is not viewed as a limitation in this thesis, its challenges are acknowledged. Humes and Bryce (2003) suggest that the search for meaning and clarity can be seen as illusory in research of this nature – there will always be other perspectives. Foucault (1972) maintains that 'everything' is never said, and the task is to determine why it is that certain statement emerged to the exclusion of others. While this study design could be repeated by another, it is unlikely that the data would be interpreted in the same way.

The study was designed to provide for a measure of contextualisation across the sector. By drawing teachers from both community and for-profit centres, and likewise,

managers and owners from different but similarly structured centres the study findings can be viewed as contributing to assumptions that disabled children are discursively positioned outside the long day ECEC sector. There are undoubtedly centres who are finding ways to negotiate the tensions for inclusion however they did not emerge in this study.

8.5. Implications and suggestions

As earlier claimed, the study has put forward evidence of a rift between the legislation for inclusion and the neoliberal structure of the long day ECEC sector as it stands currently. Disabled children and their whānau are experiencing constrained access to appropriate and welcoming early childhood education services which cannot, in many cases be held entirely accountable for their inability to act inclusively. Chapter Seven contains evidence of a widespread predicament in the sector, which seems attributable to investor entrepreneurialism, the ways in which the sector is funded overall, and as capillary, the contestable funding for disabled children. Discourses of developmentalism and biomedicine, coupled with the human rights rhetoric of the legislation have contrived to provide ways of mitigating this predicament by excluding disabled children. To address this rift, and to position disabled children as aligning with the intent of the legislation, this study concludes with suggestions for restructuring the sector.

8.6. Suggestions for Aotearoa New Zealand's leaders

Firstly, to the government, this study recommends requiring that all taxpayer funding to the sector is accounted for according to guidelines specifically intended to ensure that such monies cannot be used to increase investor yield. Building additional centres which are privately owned should be paid for with private capital. The use of taxpayer funds should be made transparent and placed in the public arena for scrutiny. Paying low wages and relying on unqualified staff, as this study has shown, is not conducive to authentic inclusion. As Neuwelt-Kearns and Ritchie (2020) argue, "Private for-profit providers are less likely to provide quality services across a range of indicators, including staff qualifications, workloads and retention, teacher-to-child ratios, and

cultural responsiveness," (paragraph 4).

Secondly, funding for support for disabled children in regular ECEC settings should not be contestable. A child should receive equitable support as it is required and in a timely manner in order that they may participate as the legislation intends. Children do not acquire disability according to a budget. Poor funding responses, long delays in assessment by specialist services, and limited support hours is inappropriate and breaches Aotearoa New Zealand's commitment to *The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child* (U.N.C.R.O.C.) (1993): Article 23 states that disabled child should enjoy the best possible life in society and Governments should remove all obstacles for disabled children to become independent and to participate actively in the community. Furthermore, *The Human Rights Act* (1989) deems it illegal to discriminate on grounds of disability, yet this study shows such discrimination is common in the ECEC sector.

The third suggestion is regarding teacher remuneration. Teachers' salaries in long day ECEC need to be paid directly to the teacher by the Ministry of Education (M.O.E.) in the same ways as their teaching counterparts in kindergartens, and on the same incremental pay scale. Centres may receive an operations budget, formulated in the same way as the compulsory sectors do. The current funding model leaves total responsibility for how the taxpayer funding is spent in the hands of a largely privatised sector and, as this study shows, this model is contributing to the positioning of disabled children outside the sector. Funding teacher salaries direct from M.O.E. to teacher removes any likelihood that the private sector can keep wages low to remain viable or to increase company profitability. Paying low wages and relying on unqualified staff is, as this study has shown, is not conducive to inclusion. As the literature indicates, qualified and experienced teachers are more likely to be of benefit to disabled children (e.g., Grace et al. 2008; Macartney, 2019; MacArthur & Morton, 1999; Mohay & Reid, 2006; Purdue, 2009) and to achieve these benefits for disabled children, teachers need to be well remunerated. Additionally, the suggestion of direct paid salaries may remove the instances of bullying and frustration in the sector because the incentive to keep wages low, provide minimal sick leave and restricted professional development opportunities by arguing limited funds would be removed.

8.7. A wero (challenge) for the sector

It is timely to revisit our image of the child. Discourses of biomedicine, as this study has shown, reinforce an image of the disabled child as needy and dependent. Positioning children in this way creates a further disjuncture between the disabled child and *Te Whāriki* which promotes an image of “competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society (M.O.E., p. 5). *Te Whāriki* also holds the promise that *all* children will be empowered to learn with and alongside others, and that barriers to inclusion will be removed. This study shows that the sector is breaking this promise and it is timely to make restoration. Macartney (2011) reminds us that with our privilege comes responsibility and obligation to expose ourselves to, and learn from, different ways of understanding, knowing about and engaging with disabled children and their whānau. The practices towards disabled children evidenced in this study are in many cases unethical. Teachers, owners, and managers are well placed to resist unethical practices, to disrupt discourses that position disabled children outside of the regular setting, and to communicate their professional obligations without caveat.

8.8. Concluding remarks

To accept that there is no alternative to the status quo is to accept that privilege is to be expected alongside marginalisation. This was not shown to be the case in this study: disabled children were positioned as valued alongside being problematic. Rather the study has shown that teachers, owners, and managers are both influencing and being influenced by neoliberal discourse and its capillaries. The resulting practices are preventing a revisioning of the sector as a place for all children. Foucault (1992) argued that the subject needs to be inserted in between power and knowledge. The subject here is the disabled child, the power is neoliberal economics, which has changed the kaupapa (discussion/agenda/practices) in the sector, and the

knowledge which is being constructed by way of a series of accountability regimes in the name of quality. If we are to live inclusively, we must begin by challenging the discourses which perpetuate structures and systems preventing some of us from joining in, from being respected, from being a part of our own communities, from being positioned on the 'inside'. This study has put forward strong evidence that, as a sector, we have to reconsider our practices and their underlying structures before whānau of disabled young children feel assured that their child will be welcome to learn, play and be cared for alongside their able peers in the sector. Denying access must no longer be an option.

Me mahi tahi tātou

Mo te oranga o te katoa

*We should work together for the wellbeing
of everyone*

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APPENDICES

NOTE: The title of the thesis has changed with the growth of the study, the findings, and the researcher. The original title, as seen on the appendices, is the one that participants received at the time of approach. My name has also changed to include McAdam.

Appendix 1 Participant information sheet for teachers

Study Title:

The business of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long day education and care centres.

Researcher name and contact details:

Lesley Lyons
70 Normans Hill Road
Onehunga
Auckland 1061
Ph. 0272550883
l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Introduction:

Kia Ora,

My name is Lesley Lyons and I am studying towards the degree of Doctor of Education at the University of Waikato. I have had more than thirty years' experience in the early childhood education sector (ECE) and am currently employed as a lecturer in early childhood education at the University of Auckland. My prior experience in the field includes kindergartens, family day care and owning/operating a long day ECE centre in central Auckland.

Overview of the study:

To complete my doctorate, I am planning to carry out a study of possible influences and tensions surrounding the inclusion of children with special needs/disabilities in a northern urban region. The study will gather interview data from teachers, owners/managers and families of children disabilities and is intended to enhance

understandings, approaches, and practices in the sector with regard to disability.

The research is investigation four main questions:

- What understandings do owners/managers, teachers, and families of children with disabilities have about access for young children with disabilities in ECEC centres?
- What views about disability and inclusion are held by adult participants in long day ECEC centres?
- How are views apparent in the processes and practices of adults surrounding the inclusion of children disabilities in ECEC?
- Is there a difference between types of ECEC services in the ways in which knowledge of disability and inclusion are acted upon?

Request for participants:

I am seeking voluntary participants who are NZ qualified and registered ECEC teachers working in services with opening hours designed to accommodate parents' employment obligations. If you agree to take part in this study, I would ask you to take part in an interview with me to share your views, understandings and experiences (if any) of working with children with disabilities. The interview will take approximately 1-1/2 hours and will be digitally (audio) recorded. Later you would have the opportunity to review your interview transcript and make any amendments. I am aware that my role at The University of Auckland raises the possibility that potential participants may have a prior professional relationship with me. I wish to stress that your decision to participate or not will not affect any existing professional relationships now or in the future.

The study had been approved the University of Waikato, Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee.

If you agree to participate, I ask that you sign the attached consent form and return it to me at the above address. If you would like to discuss the study further, please contact me.

Kind regards,

Lesley Lyons

Appendix 2 Informed consent form: Teacher participants

Study title:

The business of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long day education and care centres.

Researcher name and contact details:

Lesley Lyons
70 Normans Hill Road
Onehunga
Auckland 1061
Ph. 0272550883
l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Lise Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz
Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell" lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Name _____ Contact address _____

- I understand the purpose of this research project and what will be required of me as a participant
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
- I understand that participation is voluntary and that my participation/non-participation will in no way affect my standing or my employment in my organisation
- I understand that I can withdraw from the interviews at any stage, not answer any questions I feel uncomfortable about, and withdraw from the study entirely up to two weeks after the date of the interview
- I understand that I will be offered a copy of the transcribed interview and that I will be able to withdraw or have altered specific excerpts of the transcript if it is inaccurate, or compromising of my own or my ECEC centre's anonymity up to two weeks after I received my transcribed copy
- I understand that after this time I will be unable to withdraw my information from this

study

- I understand that should I choose not to view my transcribed interview I will have up to three weeks after the interview to withdraw all my information. After this, I will be unable to withdraw my information
- I understand that my anonymity and that of my centre is guaranteed and my real name or other identifying information will not be used
- I understand that access to the data will be restricted to the researcher and her supervisors, and the transcriber who has signed a confidentiality agreement.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this study which I would prefer not to discuss with the researcher, I can contact the researcher's supervisors whose details have been provided to me

I agree to take part in this research:

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Appendix 3 Participant information sheet: owner/manager

Study Title:

The business of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long day education and care centres.

Researcher name and contact details:

Lesley Lyons

70 Normans Hill Road

Onehunga

Auckland 1061

Ph. 0272550883

l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Introduction:

Kia Ora,

My name is Lesley Lyons and I am studying towards the degree of Doctor of Education at the University of Waikato. I have had more than thirty years' experience in the early childhood education sector (ECE) and am currently employed as a lecturer in early childhood education at the University of Auckland. My prior experience in the field includes kindergartens, family day care and owning/operating a long day ECE centre in central Auckland.

Overview of the study:

To complete my doctorate, I am planning to carry out a study of possible influences and tensions surrounding the inclusion of children with special needs/disabilities in a northern urban region. The study will gather interview data from teachers, owners/managers and families of children disabilities and is intended to enhance understandings, approaches, and practices in the sector with regard to disability.

The research is investigation four main questions:

- What understandings do owners/managers, teachers, and families of children with disabilities have about access for young children with disabilities in ECEC centres?
- What views about disability and inclusion are held by adult participants in long day

ECEC centres?

- How are views apparent in the processes and practices of adults surrounding the inclusion of children disabilities in ECEC?
- Is there a difference between types of ECEC services in the ways in which knowledge of disability and inclusion are acted upon?

Request for participants:

I am seeking voluntary participants who are NZ qualified and registered ECEC teachers working in services with opening hours designed to accommodate parents' employment obligations. If you agree to take part in this study, I ask you to take part in an interview with me to share your views, understandings and experiences (if any) of working with children with disabilities. The interview will take approximately 1-1/2 hours and will be digitally (audio) recorded. Later you would have the opportunity to review your interview transcript and make any amendments. I am aware that my role at The University of Auckland raises the possibility that potential participants may have a prior professional relationship with me. I wish to stress that your decision to participate or not will not affect any existing professional relationships now or in the future.

The study had been approved the University of Waikato, Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee.

If you agree to participate, I ask that you sign the attached consent form and return it to me at the above address. If you would like to discuss the study further, please contact me.

Kind regards,

Lesley Lyons

Appendix 4 Informed consent form: owner/ manager

Study title:

The business of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long day education and care centres.

Researcher name and contact details:

Lesley Lyons
70 Normans Hill Road
Onehunga
Auckland 1061
Ph. 0272550883
l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Lise Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz
Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell" lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Name _____ Contact address _____

- I understand the purpose of this research project and what will be required of me as a participant
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
- I understand that participation is voluntary and that my participation/non-participation will in no way affect my standing or my employment in my organisation
- I understand that I can withdraw from the interviews at any stage, not answer any questions I feel uncomfortable about, and withdraw from the study entirely up to two weeks after the date of the interview
- I understand that I will be offered a copy of the transcribed interview and that I will be able to withdraw or have altered specific excerpts of the transcript if it is inaccurate, or compromising of my own or my ECEC centre's anonymity up to two weeks after I received my transcribed copy

- I understand that after this time I will be unable to withdraw my information from this study
- I understand that should I choose not to view my transcribed interview I will have up to three weeks after the interview to withdraw all my information. After this, I will be unable to withdraw my information
- I understand that my anonymity and that of my centre is guaranteed and my real name or other identifying information will not be used
- I understand that access to the data will be restricted to the researcher and her supervisors, and the transcriber who has signed a confidentiality agreement.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this study which I would prefer not to discuss with the researcher, I can contact the researcher's supervisors whose details have been provided to me

I agree to take part in this research:

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Appendix 5 Participant information sheet: Parent /caregiver

Study Title:

The business of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long day education and care centres.

Researcher name and contact details:

Lesley Lyons

70 Normans Hill Road

Onehunga

Auckland 1061

Ph. 0272550883

l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Introduction:

Kia Ora,

My name is Lesley Lyons and I am studying towards the degree of Doctor of Education at the University of Waikato. I have had more than thirty years' experience in the early childhood education sector (ECE) and am currently employed as a lecturer in early childhood education at the University of Auckland. My prior experience in the field includes kindergartens, family day care and owning/operating a long day ECE centre in central Auckland.

Overview of the study:

To complete my doctorate, I am planning to carry out a study of possible influences and tensions surrounding the inclusion of children with special needs/disabilities in a northern urban region. The study will gather interview data from teachers, owners/managers and families of children disabilities and is intended to enhance understandings, approaches, and practices in the sector with regard to disability.

The research is investigation four main questions:

- What understandings do owners/managers, teachers, and families of children with

disabilities have about access for young children with disabilities in ECEC centres?

- What views about disability and inclusion are held by adult participants in long day ECEC centres?
- How are views apparent in the processes and practices of adults surrounding the inclusion of children disabilities in ECEC?
- Is there a difference between types of ECEC services in the ways in which knowledge of disability and inclusion are acted upon?

Request for participants:

I am seeking voluntary participants who are NZ qualified and registered ECEC teachers working in services with opening hours designed to accommodate parents' employment obligations. If you agree to take part in this study, I would ask you to take part in an interview with me to share your views, understandings and experiences (if any) of working with children with disabilities. The interview will take approximately 1-1 1/2 hours and will be digitally (audio) recorded. Later you would have the opportunity to review your interview transcript and make any amendments. I am aware that my role at The University of Auckland raises the possibility that potential participants may have a prior professional relationship with me. I wish to stress that your decision to participate or not will not affect any existing professional relationships now or in the future.

The study had been approved the University of Waikato, Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee.

If you agree to participate, I ask that you sign the attached consent form and return it to me at the above address. If you would like to discuss the study further, please contact me.

Kind regards,

Lesley Lyons

Appendix 6 Informed consent form: Parent/caregiver(whānau)

Study title:

The business of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long day education and care centres.

Researcher name and contact details:

Lesley Lyons

70 Normans Hill Road

Onehunga

Auckland 1061

Ph. 0272550883

l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Lise Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz

Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell" lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Name _____ Contact address _____

- I understand the purpose of this research project and what will be required of me as a participant
- I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
- I understand that participation is voluntary and that my participation/non-participation will in no way affect my standing or my employment in my organisation
- I understand that I can withdraw from the interviews at any stage, not answer any questions I feel uncomfortable about, and withdraw from the study entirely up to two weeks after the date of the interview
- I understand that I will be offered a copy of the transcribed interview and that I will be able to withdraw or have altered specific excerpts of the transcript if it is inaccurate, or compromising of my own or my ECEC centre's anonymity up to two weeks after I received my transcribed copy
- I understand that after this time I will be unable to withdraw my information from this

study

- I understand that should I choose not to view my transcribed interview I will have up to three weeks after the interview to withdraw all my information. After this, I will be unable to withdraw my information
- I understand that my anonymity and that of my centre is guaranteed and my real name or other identifying information will not be used
- I understand that access to the data will be restricted to the researcher and her supervisors, and the transcriber who has signed a confidentiality agreement.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this study which I would prefer not to discuss with the researcher, I can contact the researcher's supervisors whose details have been provided to me

I agree to take part in this research:

Signed _____ **Date** _____

Appendix 7 Draft letter for publication in Parent to Parent e-newsletter

Kia Ora,

My name is Lesley Lyons and I am studying towards the degree of Doctor of Education at the University of Waikato. I have had more than thirty years' experience in the early childhood education sector (ECE) and am currently employed as a lecturer in early childhood education at the University of Auckland. My prior experience in the field includes kindergartens, family day care and owning/operating a long day ECE centre in central Auckland.

I am seeking voluntary participant who are parenting/caring for a child aged between two and six years with disabilities. If you agree to take part in this study, I would ask you to take part in an interview with me to share you views, understandings and perceptions about the inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres. In particular, this study is interested in access and participation in long day centres ie: those centres open for the hours of an adult's working day. The study is not limited to parents/caregivers who have a child an ECEC centre currently. The interview will take approximately 1-1/2 hours and will be digitally (audio) recorded. Later you would have the opportunity to review your interview transcript and make any amendments to it. The study will ensure confidentiality and anonymity for participants, their child and any associated services. The intent of the study is to better understand the implications for all involved with the inclusion process in long day ECEC in order to work to improve access and challenge barriers for children with disabilities and their families/whānau. I am happy to meet you at a time and location of your choice. I am also requesting that each participant, once consent has been signed, write a brief background for the researcher including details such as family structure, employment if relevant, age of child, type of ECEC service attending (if any), and any other details they wish to share with the researcher.

Please contact me at l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz or 0272550883 if you would like to discuss the study with me, or if you would like to be a participant.

Thank you, Lesley Lyons

Appendix 8 Transcriber confidentiality agreement.

Study title: The 'business' of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long-day early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres.

Researcher name/contact details:

Lesley Lyons
70 Normans Hill Road
Onehunga
Auckland 1061
Ph 09 6366659
0272550883
l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/ contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Lise Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz

Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell: lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

I agree to transcribe the audiotapes for the above research project and understand that the information contained within them is absolutely confidential and may not be disclosed to, or discussed with, anyone other than the researcher.

Name: -----

Date: _____

Signed: _____

This confidentiality form will be stored as per the University of Waikato's *Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations 2008* (Refer section 9(4a)). The agreement will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of Auckland's Epsom campus for a period of 6 years and then destroyed.

Appendix 9 Interview schedule: teacher participants

- 1) What knowledge do you have regarding access for children with disabilities in ECEC?
- 2) How have you learned about disability and inclusion?
- 3) Do you have an experience of inclusion that you would like to share?
- 4) What organisational structures do you consider promote, or create barriers to inclusion?
- 5) What teacher knowledge, understanding and practices do you consider promote, or create barriers to inclusion?

Appendix 10 Interview Schedule: owners/managers

- 1) What knowledge do you have about access and participation for children with disabilities in ECEC centres?
- 2) What do you see as the main benefits (if any) to including children with disabilities?
- 3) What do you see as the main barriers (if any) to including children with disabilities?
- 4) Could you share your views about any issues that your organisation may have regarding including children with disabilities?

Appendix 11 Interview schedule: whānau (parents/ caregivers)

- 1) What are your understandings about access for children with disabilities to ECEC?
- 2) What are your hopes and aspirations for your child regarding access to ECEC?
- 3) What do you see as the main benefits (if any) of inclusion for your child?
- 4) What are your main concerns (if any) about inclusion for your child?
- 5) Could you share any views you have about issues that an ECEC centre might face regarding inclusion generally?

Appendix 12 Request for site access:

Study title: The 'business' of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long-day early childhood care and education centres.

Researcher name/contact details:

Lesley Lyons
70 Normans Hill Road
Onehunga Auckland 1061
0272550883

l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/ contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Lise Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz

Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell: lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Dear Owner/ Manager,

My name is Lesley Lyons and I am studying towards a Doctor of Education degree at the University of Waikato. I am a registered early childhood teacher and the former owner of a long-day early childhood education and care (ECEC) centre in Auckland. I am currently lecturing in Early Childhood Education at the Faculty of Education, University of Auckland.

I am seeking a small number of participants for a research project and am writing to request permission to approach early childhood teachers currently employed by your organisation.

Please read this information sheet carefully before deciding whether or not you agree to this request. If you decide that I may proceed, I thank you. If you decide I may not, thank you for taking the time to consider this request and be assured that there will be no disadvantage of any kind to your organisation.

What is the aim of the project?

The purpose of the project is to explore possible tensions and complexities in

the inclusion of children with disabilities/special needs in long day ECEC.

The research is investigating 4 main questions:

- What understandings do owners/managers, teachers, families of children with disabilities have about access for young children with disability in early childhood education and care (ECEC) centres?
- What views about disability and inclusion are held by adult participants in long day ECEC centres?
- How are views apparent in the processes and practices of adults surrounding the inclusion of children with disabilities in ECEC?
- Is there a difference between types of ECEC services in the ways in which knowledge of disability and inclusion is acted on?

What type of participant is being sought?

I am looking for New Zealand qualified and registered early childhood teachers, currently working in long-day ECEC centres, willing to take part in this research project.

What will participation in the project involve?

Participants will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview with the researcher. This discussion will take approximately 1-1/2 hours and will be digitally (audio) recorded for later transcription. The interview will take place outside of usual working hours. The transcribing will be done by the researcher and an assistant who has signed a confidentiality agreement.

Can participants withdraw from the project after the interview has taken place?

Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project up to 2

weeks from the date of the interview. Contact details for the researcher will be provided in a participant information sheet which will be sent to teachers interested in the study. Participants will be offered a copy of the transcribed interview and to withdraw or have altered specific excerpts of the transcript up to 2 weeks after they receive a transcribed copy. After this time participants will be unable to withdraw their information from the study

Participants who choose not to view their transcribed interview will have up to 3 weeks after the interview to withdraw all of their information. After this time participants will be unable to withdraw their information from the study.

Participants may request the deletion of information only if it is inaccurate.

How data will be used?

The data collected will be used in the formation of a thesis in partial fulfilment of an Education Doctorate at the University of Waikato. In addition, they will be used in the writing of academic journal articles, a book chapter and presentation at professional conferences.

How will the data be stored?

The data collected in this study will be stored as per the University of Waikato's *Ethical Conduct in Human Research and Related Activities Regulations 2008*. All non-identifying data (e.g. data sets and transcripts) used for publication will be securely kept long enough to allow for academic examination, challenge, or peer review. This period will be at least five years. Identifying data such as consent forms

will be securely stored consistent with agreements made under section 9(4)(a) of these regulations. The data will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in my office at the University of Auckland's Epsom campus.

Anonymity

For confidentiality purposes all potentially identifying information will be removed from my analysis and participants will be given a pseudonym to protect their identity. Further, I will take care not to make statements or include information likely to identify participants, or their ECEC centre.

Confidentiality

I will not share raw data with anyone except the ones agreed to in the attached consent form (transcriber and my 2 supervisors). All potentially identifying information will be removed from my analysis. Further, I will take care not to make statements or include information likely to identify participants or the ECEC centre in which they are employed. Participants' views will be grouped with those of other respondents so that individuals, their views, experiences and stories cannot be identified. Participants will be informed that for any publications or presentations their responses be kept confidential and the results will be analysed and presented in such a manner that their identity will remain protected.

Voluntary participation

Participation will be entirely voluntary, and no individual or organisation should feel any professional obligation to participate based on any knowledge of, or prior relationship with the researcher. Please contact me with any questions you may have.

Ngā mihi,
Lesley Lyons

Appendix 13 Informed consent form: Site access

Study title: The 'business' of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long-day early childhood care and education centres.

Researcher name/contact details:

Lesley Lyons

70 Normans Hill Road Onehunga

Auckland 1061

Ph 09 6366659

0272550883

l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/ contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Lise Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz

Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell: lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Name: _____ **Contact address:** _____

- I understand the purpose of this research project and what will be required of a teacher participant in my employ
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
- I understand that participation in this study will not interrupt employee's usual working hours.

- I understand that the identity of this organisation and its employees will remain confidential
- I understand that access to the data will be restricted to the researcher and her supervisors, and the transcriber who has signed a confidentiality agreement.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this study which I would prefer not to discuss with the researcher, I can contact the researcher's supervisors whose details have been provided to me.

I agree to grant site access for the purposes of this research:

Signed _____ Date _____

Informed consent form: Site access

Study title: The 'business' of disability: An examination of the complexities and tensions surrounding inclusion in long-day early childhood care and education centres.

Researcher name/contact details:

Lesley Lyons
70 Normans Hill Road
Onehunga
Auckland 1061
Ph 09 6366659
0272550883
l.lyons@auckland.ac.nz

Supervisors' name/ contact details:

Assoc. Prof. Use Claiborne: claiboli@waikato.ac.nz

Assoc. Prof. Linda Mitchell: lindamit@waikato.ac.nz

Name	Contact address
_____	_____
_____	_____

- I understand the purpose of this research project and what will be required of a teacher participant employed by this organisation
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and have them answered
- I understand that participation in this study will not interrupt employee's usual working hours.
- I understand that the identity of this organisation and its employees will remain confidential
- I understand that access to the data will be restricted to the researcher and her supervisors, and the transcriber who has signed a confidentiality agreement.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding this study which I would prefer not to discuss with the researcher, I can contact the researcher's supervisors whose details have been provided to me.

I agree to grant site access for the purposes of this research:

Signed ____ **Date** ____