

Meet Sanjeeta Prasad, an Early Intervention Teacher (EIT)

Based in Auckland, joined the Ministry of Education in 2019



Sanjeeta's story

Sanjeeta has worked at the Ministry of Education for 5 years, and as an EIT for 9 years. She used to work as a primary school teacher in Fiji, before moving to Aotearoa to work in early childhood education.

She became interested in early intervention after caring for many children with learning support and behavioural needs in her early education centre.

Sanjeeta's day-to-day

As an Early Intervention Teacher, Sanjeeta usually works with 3–6-year-old children who have learning difficulties, self-regulation issues, physical needs, and cognitive or behavioural issues. She collaborates with speech language therapists (SLTs) or psychologists, as well as the child's whanau and teachers, to create a plan to support the child's transition into school.

Working as an EIT, Sanjeeta has recognised the importance of interpersonal skills such as patience and being a good listener. Being able to take feedback and having good time management skills have also been critical.

Reflecting cultural values in her work

Sanjeeta works with a lot of Indian children in her area and is aware of their cultural needs and customs. She works hard to understand each child that she works with, so that she can tailor her approach to the framework so their different needs can be met even when the diagnosis is the same.

Rewards of the role

Sanjeeta describes being an EIT as a role that takes both passion and purpose. She says that “making the difference in young people’s lives and setting them up for...success is rewarding” and that she enjoys working at the Ministry because “people are very flexible... One size does not fit all, and people understand that in the Ministry”.

Sanjeeta would love to

“deliver more IYP. In the future [she wants] to do some leadership role so [she] can share the knowledge with other EITs.”

Early Intervention Teacher – Role information

Role responsibility:

- support the learning of children with special education needs by working closely with the adults in the child’s life e.g. parents, teachers and other professionals, including other Ministry staff and health specialists
- assess child and family needs by gathering information from the family/whānau about their needs in everyday settings and routines
- collect information from the ECE service or other professionals involved as part of the ongoing assessment and planning process
- assist with the development of an individualised intervention plan for the child, family/whānau and teachers
- play a key role in supporting the implementation of the plan, often through provision of coaching and mentoring for families/whānau and teachers
- often take a lead role in the facilitation of services for children and families/whānau
- support families/whānau at the time of their child’s transition to school. This support may include; facilitating any funding application processes, developing a plan for transition, visiting selected schools with the family/whānau.

Qualifications and experience needed:

- a Bachelor or Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood)
- to be a registered teacher
- to have attained or be working towards a Postgraduate Diploma in Specialist Teaching (Early Intervention) and

- have at least three years early childhood teaching experience.

An Early Intervention Teacher must have knowledge of or skills in:

- Te Whāriki, the New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum
- child development
- the range of different early childhood facilities and their philosophies
- effective early childhood teaching practices
- inclusive practices for children with a range of special education needs
- family centred practice
- working with culturally diverse families/whānau
- effective communication
- how to work effectively with adults to support children with special education needs.

Career development

Becoming an early intervention teacher with the Ministry of Education will give you the rewards and challenges of the job itself, as well as opportunities to develop your career.

You will be:

- be supported and supervised by experienced professional colleagues
- be kept up to date with the latest evidence
- take part in ongoing professional learning and development
- have opportunities to share and extend your knowledge and skills.

There might also be opportunities to take part in projects or working groups and in time, you might be considered for leadership roles.

Further Information

Learning support careers and professional development

For more information about the role of a special education adviser and working in learning support, visit our [learning support careers page](#)

Learning support scholarships and study awards

If you're interested in a career in learning support, you may be eligible for a scholarship or study award. Find out [more here](#)